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Beyond Reason:

Brexit, Philanthropy and the Threat to Democracy

Dr Peter Grant, Cass Business School, City, University of London

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This paper considers the likely impact of the UK leaving the European Union around the three key referendum issues of the economy, sovereignty and immigration. It then suggests some of the ways charitable and private philanthropy should respond, especially regarding potential threats to British democracy.

Executive Summary

The main arguments in this paper are:

1. There is no credible evidence that Brexit will have an overall positive impact economically, including if immigration is reduced.
2. The vote to leave the EU was significantly decided by those who did not base their decision upon reason but instead on what I term 'cognitive xenophobia'. Though a minority, it was significant enough to 'tip the balance' in favour of leave.
3. Supported by right-wing media, this xenophobia has become far more acceptable and constitutes a threat to democracy.
4. Philanthropy and philanthropists have a duty to respond.

The potentially negative effect on the economy was by far the biggest issue mentioned by those who voted to remain in the EU. Of those who voted Leave the vast majority said sovereignty (90%) or immigration (88%) was the most important issue with the economy a very poor third (15%). The arguments of the campaign should have been based around facts about the economy and immigration. Instead they were based, on the Leave side, by appeals to emotion rather than reason.

The economy

The economics profession is almost unanimous in its view that leaving the EU would make the UK economically worse off. The only study that predicts Brexit will lead to a strengthening of the economy was produced by the 'Economists for Brexit' group of academics (now called 'Economists for Free Trade') led by Professor Patrick Minford. Unlike the other studies Minford's work has not been published by a reputable academic source and has been described by others as 'implausible' and full of 'undergraduate level error[s]'.

Though it may be true that collectively the EU may lose more than the UK from Brexit this is spread across 27 countries and therefore the impact in each is actually very small. The only one that would lose significantly other than the UK is Ireland.

The overall impact on the economy, if the overwhelming majority of economists are proved correct, will be a worsening of poverty and relative deprivation in the UK. Just how much worse is debated but, whatever the extent, it will place a greater burden on charity and philanthropy.

Sovereignty

The worry for charity and philanthropy once Britain becomes free of the European Court of Justice is that future governments could seek to pass laws which repeal or weaken our current rights by scrapping 'inconvenient' rules such as the following, all of which derive from EU law:

- data protection: including protections for individuals around the information held about them;
- human trafficking: including protections for victims of trafficking;
- disability rights: including protections at work;
- workplace discrimination: including the working time directive and protection on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age and

- equal pay: making sure that men and women receive equal pay for equal work.

In addition, the UK may be achieving greater sovereignty from the EU but by the nature of a globalised world it will merely be swapping this with a surrendering of sovereignty to countries such as China, Saudi Arabia or even Russia through its future trade deals.

Immigration

The argument of the Leavers is that their opposition to immigration has no connection to racism or xenophobia and is entirely rational, being based on the negative impact immigration has on the economy and public services. This view is disproved by objective research. There is considerable literature on the impact of immigration on the UK economy and a clear consensus that, even in the short-term, EU migration has a positive impact. For example when compared with natives of the same age-gender composition and education, recent EU immigrants are 39% less likely than natives to receive benefits.

Whatever rules the UK adopts, immigration to the UK will be impacted by one key factor – the strength of the economy. If the UK economy is strong and growing there will be a continued need for immigrants. But if, as looks much more likely, the economy goes into decline fewer people will come to the UK. Paradoxically this will be hailed by the Brexiteers as a triumph for their views, but it will in fact be a condemnation.

Recent psychological studies of referendum voters have demonstrated that a key variable at play in the vote was xenophobia. The studies demonstrate that support for the outcome of the EU referendum was linked to individual predictors of prejudice toward foreigners namely:

- Right wing authoritarianism;
- Social dominance orientation and
- Collective narcissism.

Collective narcissism was the strongest predictor. The term ‘collective narcissism’ was first proposed by the psychoanalyst Erich Fromm and sociologist Theodore Adorno to describe the sentiment that gave support to Nazi rule in Germany in the 1930s.

Collective narcissists voted to leave the European Union because they feared and rejected immigrants. Those who were proud about being British but not narcissistic, voted to remain because they saw their country as indispensable in defining the European Union’s identity.

The combination of these research studies shows that psychological factors explain much of the variance in the perceived threat of immigrants and support for the Brexit vote over and above other previously examined predictors such as age, education, ethnicity or, contrary to what many people have said (both journalists and academics), economic disadvantage.

The threat to democracy

With Brexit, the election of Donald Trump, the Freedom Party sharing power in Austria, the Law and Justice Party in power in Poland, Alternative for Germany (AfD) winning 94 seats and entering parliament for the first time, Geert Wilders's Freedom Party (PVV) coming second in the Dutch election, Marine Le Pen of the National Front (FN) reaching the run-off for the Presidency in France and gains by populist and anti-democratic parties in Italy and Hungary there is little doubt that xenophobically fuelled populism is on the rise across western democracies for the first time in over 80 years.

In Britain populist xenophobia has been fuelled and given legitimacy by mainstream media and columnists who are impervious to facts about the economy or immigration and replace reasoned argument with vitriol and personal attacks against those with whom they disagree. This kind of reporting, which is further enhanced through social media, encourages the irrational responses of extreme collective narcissists and hatred against immigrants.

A new role for philanthropy

A first vital task for philanthropy is to vigorously oppose racism and ignorance regarding immigration as well as providing support for immigrants and directly challenging racist and inflammatory journalism.

It would not be the first time in British history that philanthropy has risen to such a challenge. The single most frequently named historic achievement of British philanthropy was the campaign to end the slave trade. The reasons for philanthropy's success then were innovation, speed of action and risk taking, freed from the need to be accountable to the electorate or to pacify the media. These advantages remain today, as long as philanthropy chooses to utilise them.

More than 80 organisations have joined forces in the 'Repeal Bill Alliance' and I would like to see this co-operation grow and expand its brief to combat all negative fallout from Brexit including supporting immigrant and refugee rights and vigorously opposing all forms of xenophobia and 'alt right' extremism.

This wider campaign needs to harness all the modern techniques exploited by those on the other side – most notably social media. This will require the participation of media and tech companies and individuals as well. Mobilising volunteers will be a crucial element.

In brief, philanthropy needs to become a lot more 'political'. This doesn't mean party political, after all 42% of Conservative supporters and 57% of their MPs supported remain.

This kind of philanthropy is sometimes better led by individual philanthropists rather than charitable foundations, as individuals are far less hidebound by legal restrictions on political activity.

Progressive philanthropists in this country should take a leaf out of the success over the last 30 years of neo-conservative philanthropy in the United States which helped secure the election of Ronald Reagan as well as the subsequent campaigns against everything from abortion to immigration. The key to this funding is that it played the long-game, investing over many years to build the strong advocacy, policy and media structure needed to influence public opinion, gain mainstream credibility and successfully shift agendas.

In these ways philanthropy can challenge attacks on immigrants, charities and non-conforming MPs and judges. Take a leaf out of Donald Trump's book and attack the attackers. Not with lies of course, but without fear of legal action. Some funders may need to form non-charitable arms to do some of this work and offer legal assistance in key cases.

At times of crisis, and especially when democracy has been under threat, philanthropy and the voluntary sector has been at its best and has acted completely independently of government. This was true of the campaign against the slave trade, during the industrial revolution and campaigns for universal suffrage, in both world wars, during the slump of the 1930s and in the counter culture era of the 1960s. And it can be the same again.

The referendum and who voted leave

The opening sentence in my last book was this: 'Nations are mythical constructs who, through perceived similarities of race, language and history, conceive themselves as unified entities.'¹

If you doubt that nations are indeed myths one only has to look at a recent example of how defining a 'nation' is an impossibility. In the Scottish Independence Referendum of 2014 who got to vote? Well, it was those on the electoral register. If you had been Scottish for generations but had left just before the register was compiled you were disenfranchised whereas if you had never had any connection with Scotland but moved there the day before registration, hey presto you were Scottish enough to vote. Hence 684,000 people, 16% of the electorate, were born outside Scotland and 906,000 people born in Scotland were denied a vote.² I therefore suggest that:

1. Nations are invented. There is no 'natural phenomenon' called an Englishperson or Scot or Pole and there is no objective way to determine one.
2. Pride in your nation can be extremely positive but as soon as you suggest people are intrinsically different just because they happen to be born on different sides of an arbitrary line on a map you start on a downward spiral that can lead to xenophobia and racism.³

Those people who unquestioningly believe in their nation's unparalleled greatness are termed by psychologists 'collective narcissists' and I'll be saying something about them later.

The main arguments in this paper are:

1. There is no credible evidence that Brexit will have an overall positive impact economically, including if immigration is reduced.
2. The vote to leave the EU was significantly decided by those who did not base their decision upon reason but instead on what I term 'cognitive xenophobia'. Though a minority, it was significant enough to 'tip the balance' in favour of leave.
3. Supported by right-wing media, this xenophobia has become far more acceptable and constitutes a threat to democracy.
4. Philanthropy and philanthropists have a duty to respond.

But first we need to examine the impact that leaving the EU is likely to have, as philanthropy's response should flow naturally from this.

A vote taken in ignorance

Whilst the average member of the public is not well informed on many political issues the EU Referendum was a glaring example of a vote taken by people who not only knew very little about the topic on which they were voting but much of what they thought they knew was completely wrong.

Just before the vote (April-May 2016) with the campaign at its height Ipsos MORI conducted a poll about how well informed the public were about the EU.⁴ Despite six out of ten people saying they knew at least 'a fair amount' about the issues what they found included:

- 84% think Britain was one of the top two contributors to the EU budget (Britain is 4th).
- The average Leave voter thinks the EU spends 30% of its budget on admin; the average Remainer 20% (the actual figure is 6%).
- Leave voters think 20% of UK residents were born in the EU (the actual figure is 5%).
- The average guess (both Leave and Remain) as to what proportion of child benefit payments are made to children living outside the UK was 14% (the actual figure is 0.3%).
- Only 12% of people knowing that the cap on bankers' bonuses came from EU regulation and only 19% that the National Living Wage was also an EU directive.
- Almost unbelievably four in ten people did not know that MEPs are elected.

Ipsos MORI's two main conclusions were that 'we overestimate what we fear' and 'colourful stories "Stick"'. This agrees with previous research on attitudes to immigration which concluded that 'the real driver of views is the vivid anecdote, which may be based on vanishingly small (but correct) instances. We know that these stick with people, but they are very difficult to monitor and control.'⁵

I will look at other evidence later, especially the influence of mainstream news sources driven by invective rather than facts.

What were the main issues?

Prior to the Brexit vote many commentators expected the economy to be the key issue, just as it is in most general elections.⁶

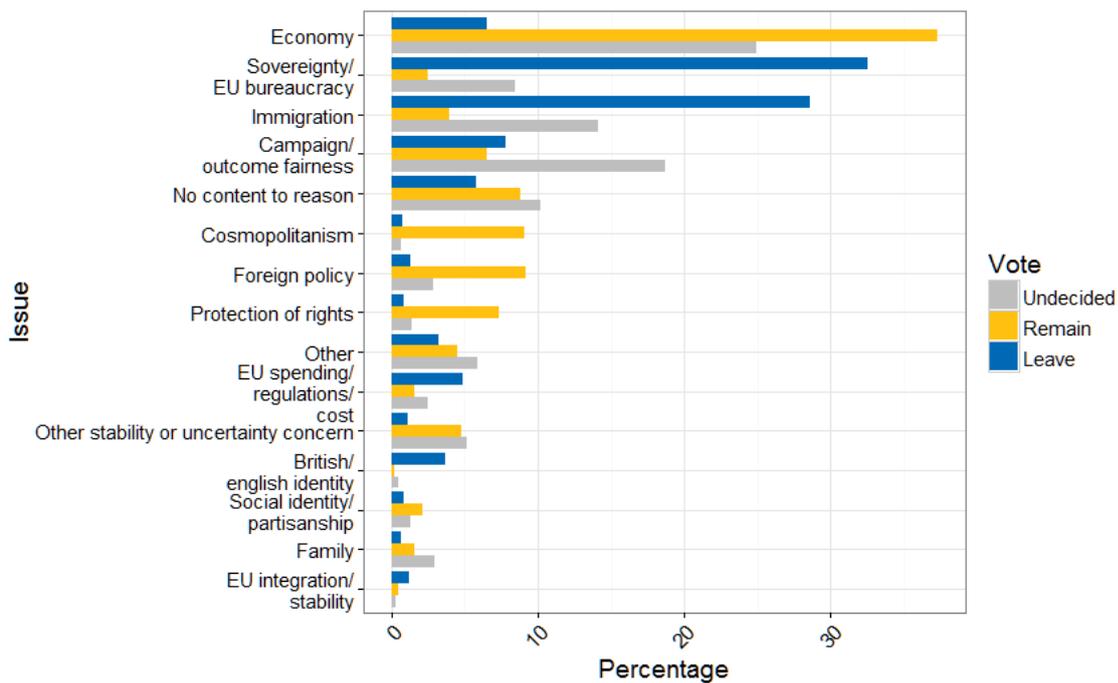
As it turned out, though the potentially negative effect on the economy was by far the biggest issue mentioned by Remainers, the British Election Study found that of those who voted Leave the vast majority said sovereignty (90%) or immigration (88%) was the most important issue with the economy a very poor third (15%).⁷ Arguments about all three issues should have been based around facts but, instead, they were based, overwhelmingly on the Leave side, by appeals to emotion rather than reason.

As Professor Thomas Fischer of Liverpool University has pointed out:

'The "leave" side's strategy was heavily based on targeting people's emotions, in particular with regard to a "fear of unrestricted immigration", "paying too much to Brussels" and "making Britain great again" [and] whilst the "remain" side aimed at providing substantiated evidence on impacts of leaving the EU, the "leave" side did not make any serious attempts to do so [it] mainly targeted emotions of the electorate, which the "remain" side largely failed to do.'⁸

Essentially the campaign was 'a contest between economics and immigration.'⁹

Figure 1: Main issues mentioned by voters in the EU referendum



Source: Voting Counts website

These figures are extremely important. 88% of people who voted leave cited immigration as an issue. I would argue that racism was, therefore, inevitably a significant factor. Racism is not something that you either have or you haven't – everyone is racist to at least a small extent - it is inescapable in a society that is, partially at least, racist.¹⁰ People learn to be what their society and culture teaches them. 'We often assume that it takes parents actively teaching their kids, for them to be racist. The truth is that unless parents actively teach kids not to be racists, they will be.'¹¹ Take an example: how many of us have never told or responded to a joke that targets a particular race or culture?

Fortunately, most people are not significantly racist, and racism plays little part in voting behaviour in General Elections. The unfortunate thing about the Brexit referendum was that it was successfully appropriated by the Leave campaign to focus on immigration and sovereignty and legitimised voting based on xenophobia.

I'm sure many of us know people who are positively anti-racist yet voted to leave and justified their decision as an attack on the establishment or their alienation from both Westminster and Brussels. The problem with this is that it takes what was a very minor issue in the vote (for leave voters overall) but ignores 'the elephant in the room'. You could equally argue that you voted for UKIP or Trump because you think they are 'anti-establishment' whilst ignoring the vastly greater importance of their reactionary policies.

We need to face the very uncomfortable fact, which is now backed by objective, detailed psychological research, that the Brexit vote was indeed a significantly xenophobic one before we can move on in the debate.

I will now turn to look at the three key points of the economy, sovereignty and immigration and try to determine what impact they will have after Brexit.

Brexit and the economy

What's the evidence?

In December 2017 David Davis admitted that since the referendum the UK government had not carried out a full assessment regarding the impact Brexit will have on the UK economy, despite claiming on many previous occasions that it had done extensive work on this and then attempting to prevent having these non-existent documents released.¹²

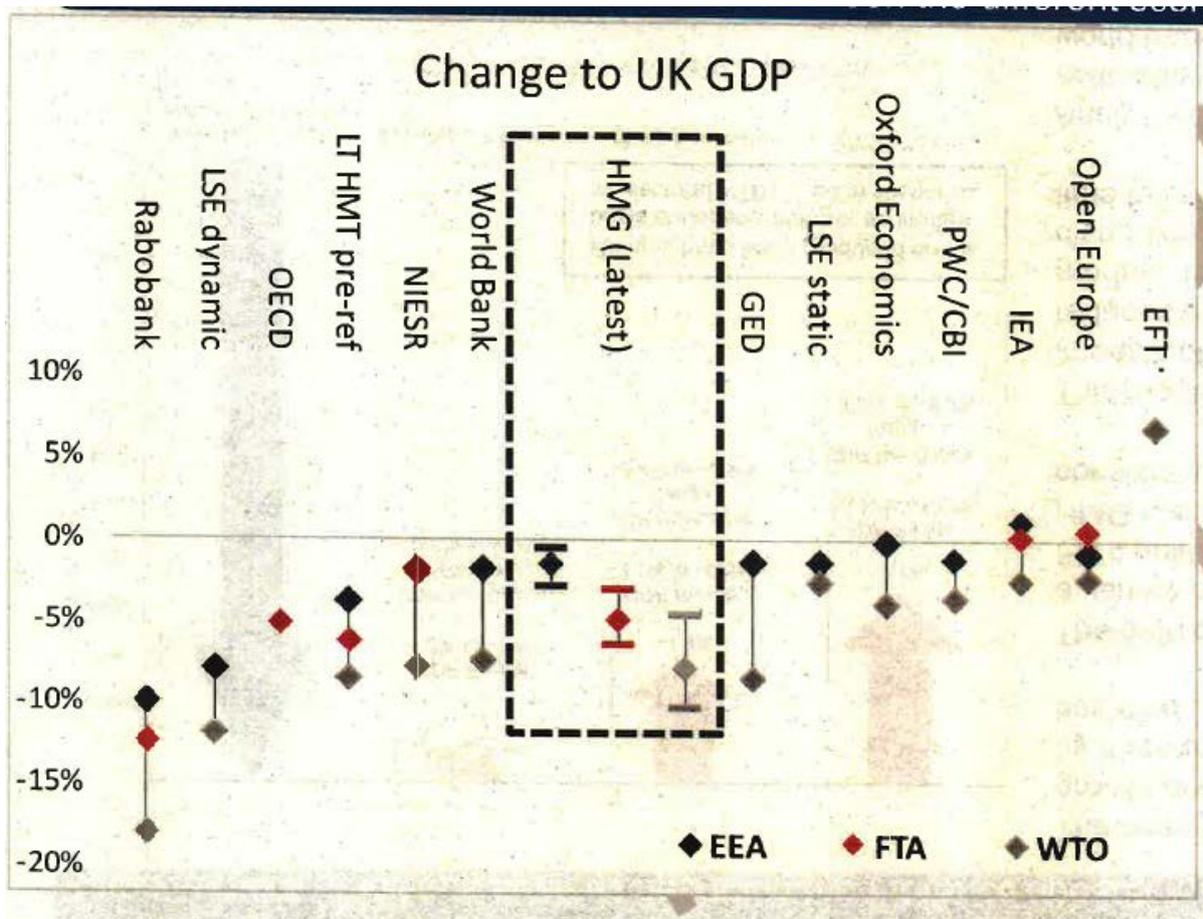
All Davis needed to do was search 'Google Scholar' where there are 9,960 such assessments. They cover everything from agriculture to waste management and several appear in the *International Journal of Impact Assessment* (the clue is in the title) so they're not exactly hard to find. Not all of them are backed up by quality, detailed research but most are. Overall, they don't make comforting reading. Whilst some, for example on UK exports or investment in gas supply, conclude that Brexit will have a negligible effect the rest, covering the key things that affect ordinary people – like jobs and income - are almost universally negative.

It is exceedingly rare for economists to be so united:

'The economics profession, famously (if not always accurately) perceived to be divided on just about everything, was almost unanimous in its view that leaving the EU would make the UK economically worse off ... That is unsurprising. There are few economic models in which increasing the costs of trade with your nearest and biggest neighbour and biggest trading partner can be anything other than damaging.'¹³

Here is Whitehall's summary of the major economic studies:¹⁴

Figure 2: Projected impact of Brexit on the UK economy



Source: House of Commons Exiting the European Union Committee, *EU Exit Analysis: Cross Whitehall briefing*, January 2018

Other recent analyses, for example by the London Mayor and the Scottish Government also fall within the ‘mainstream’ forecasts above.¹⁵ You will see that there is just one ‘outlier’ – the only one that predicts Brexit will lead to a strengthening of the economy. This was produced by the ‘Economists for Brexit’ group of academics (now called ‘Economists for Free Trade’) led by Professor Patrick Minford.

Minford is no stranger to controversy. In 1981 when 364 leading economists published a statement criticising Margaret Thatcher’s economic policy, Minford replied by defending the Government in *The Times*. He was also a strong advocate of the Community Charge or poll tax and ‘scorned the idea that there might be a financial crisis’ in 2008.¹⁶ Minford has also suggested that Brexit will ‘mostly eliminate manufacturing’ in the UK ‘leaving mainly industries such as design, marketing and hi-tech. But this shouldn’t scare us.’¹⁷ It may not scare Minford, but it would certainly scare millions of UK workers.

In Minford’s analysis his crucial assumption is that the UK will get rid of all tariffs on imports, irrespective of the behaviour of other countries, an assumption Paul Johnson and Ian Mitchell describe, generously, as ‘implausible’. John Van Reenen and others from the London School of Economics critiqued Minford’s work, arguing that ‘his model does not allow for the importance of proximity in trading relations (an important element of modern “gravity” models), assumes purchases only from lowest-cost suppliers, ignores product and quality differentiation, and

overlooks the importance of the single market for trade in services.¹⁸ It also ignores transition costs such as the £40-odd billion ‘divorce settlement’ we have agreed to pay.

Among other ‘problems’ of Minford’s work are the assumption that ‘general international pressure’ over the next decade will compel the EU to reduce its own effective tariffs on imports from 20 per cent to 10 per cent and, extraordinarily, that the loss in value of sterling will have no effect on the prices of UK imports. Minford ignores the impact of differences in EU safety and quality standards for goods on producer prices and bizarrely assumes the EU will waive its standards on goods imported from the UK post-Brexit, which implies precisely the sort of deep trade deal which his group have been consistently arguing the UK should avoid.¹⁹ Jonathan Portes, former Chief Economist at the Cabinet Office, suggested that Minford’s analysis was full of ‘undergraduate level error[s]’ such as adding fiscal ‘savings’ to GDP ‘benefits’ and Monique Ebell of the National Institute of Social and Economic Research said Minford ‘ignores decades of evidence on how trade actually works’.²⁰

Since producing his ‘rogue’ estimate Minford and colleagues have continued in the same vein. In January 2018 they produced an estimate that Britain would gain £433 billion over two years and the EU lose the same amount.²¹ This estimate is based on the imposition of WTO tariffs and, as Britain exports more to the EU than it imports, this would be the result – if the EU continued to import the same amount of goods it does now. But is this remotely feasible when all these goods and services will carry a WTO tariff? Isn’t it far more likely that they will shop elsewhere?

A key point of the Minford forecasts is their status as ‘academic research’. Minford is Professor of Applied Economics at Cardiff Business School, a position he has held since 1997. If his Brexit-related research is academically valid why has none of it been published either by his university or in academic journals, unlike the vast majority of research that contradicts his findings? Indeed, on his personal university page none of his publications under the Economists for Brexit/Free Trade banner are worthy of a mention and the last publication connected with the EU he lists is a book chapter from 2011.²² This is because they are non-academic opinion pieces rather than scholarly research. They appear either on the group’s own website or in esteemed economic journals such as the *Sun* (for whom Minford has written or contributed to seven articles since 2016) and the *Daily Express* (an astonishing 18 pieces). Yet his pronouncements are treated in the media (including the BBC) as the equivalent of the peer reviewed academically rigorous publications of his critics.

The BBC made Minford’s claim of a four percent gain its lead story and gave him much airtime. This demonstrates a problem for our main state broadcaster. During the Brexit campaign it was extremely mindful to demonstrate a supposedly ‘balanced’ approach by giving both sides equal airtime – as there were two competing sides. The problem came when 99% of expert opinion said one side was right because it meant giving the outlying one percent 50% of airtime.

Overall the media gave voters the ‘sense that economics is merely about “opinion” rather than fact, analysis, or science [which] made it easy to present “balance” as giving equal time and weight to each side of a rather unbalanced argument.’²³

There is one other economist who suggests Brexit will not be quite as bad as most other academics suggest and that is Graham Gudgin. Unsurprisingly he too is given undue media attention. Gudgin’s work came to prominence in February 2018 as part of a group of 40 academics and others called ‘Brains for Brexit’. The *Sunday Times* published their support for leaving the EU under the sub-heading: ‘Those who voted “leave” are often dismissed as dim or racist. But now some of Britain’s top academics and thinkers — from the left and right — have banded together to put the positive

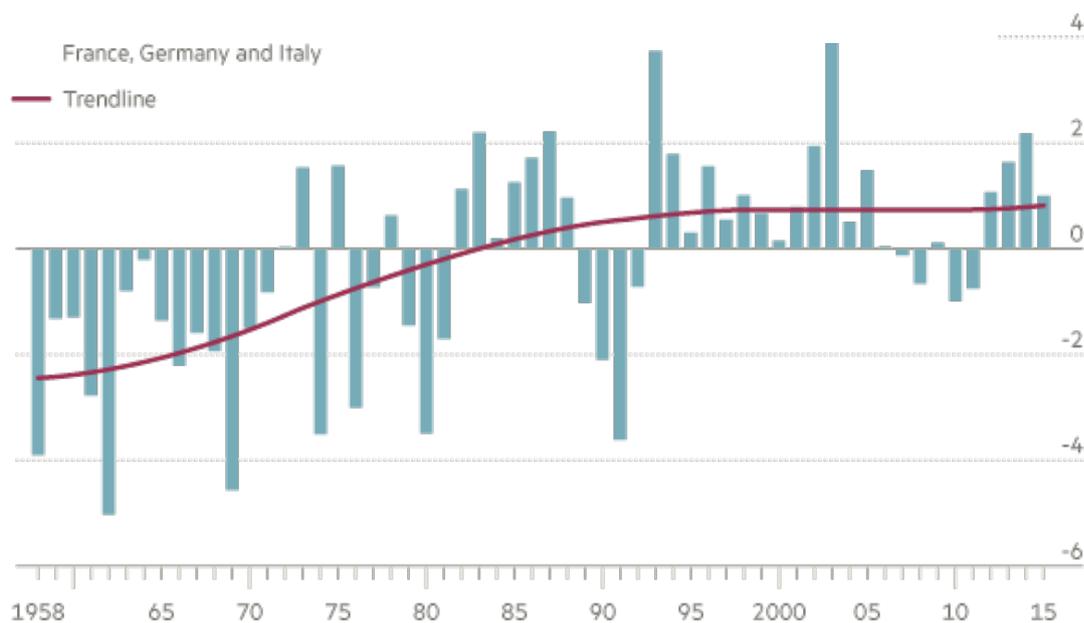
political and economic case for independence'.²⁴ Their support for Brexit was quickly countered by over 1,400 academics who took the opposite view. But the most interesting point is that even Gudgin's work does not support the headline. He and his colleagues' research only suggests that Brexit will be 'less worse' than the majority of others – perhaps a 2% decline in GDP – it by no means says Brexit will have a positive impact.²⁵

The evidence of past performance

Admittedly any attempt to predict the future of the economy is fraught with problems, however what we can do with far more objectivity is to analyse the past and ask: 'what impact has membership of the EU had on the British economy?'

Britain joined what was then the European Economic Community in 1973 as the 'sick man of Europe'. By the late 1960s, France, West Germany and Italy — the three founder members closest in size to the UK — produced more per person than we did, and the gap was growing larger every year. Between 1958, when the EEC was set up, and Britain's entry in 1973, gross domestic product per head in these three countries rose 95 per cent compared with only 50 per cent in Britain. After becoming an EEC member, Britain began to catch up. Gross domestic product per person grew faster than Italy, Germany and France over the next 40 years. In 2013, Britain became more prosperous than the average of these three economies for the first time since 1965. So, we voted for Brexit at precisely the point where our economy was at its strongest vis-à-vis our main European partners.²⁶

Figure 3: Growth in UK GDP v France, Germany and Italy since 1958



Source: The Conference Board

FT

Professor Nauro Campos of Brunel University has estimated how Britain would have fared if it had not joined the EEC/EU. He and his colleagues found the best approximation to Britain's pre-1973 economic performance to be a combination of New Zealand and Argentina, which like the UK had fallen behind the US and continental Europe.²⁷ During the next 40 years, the UK economy outperformed those two countries by 23 per cent, indeed Britain's performance also surpassed nearly all of 1,000 other combinations of countries whose record had previously resembled our own.

The UK is not alone in enjoying positive economic benefits from EU membership, which is the reason so many countries want to join. Dr Swati Dhingra and others conclude that: ‘The trade effects [of EU membership] are big – a jump of a quarter or more.’²⁸

In a comparative report published before the referendum Professor Nick Crafts of Warwick University, Britain’s pre-eminent economic historian, concluded that membership of the EU had raised UK income levels appreciably and by much more than even the proponents of EU entry had predicted. These positive effects stem from the EU’s success in increasing trade and the impact of stronger competition on UK productivity and the economic benefits of EU membership for the UK have far exceeded the costs.²⁹

Some Eurosceptics say Britain stands a better chance of growth if it looks beyond the sluggish economies of the EU. But this is a claim about the future, predicated on trading relationships that do not, and may never, exist, rather than an analysis of what has happened. For almost half a century, Britain has benefited from greater openness to world markets, which has fostered economic dynamism. Economists have demonstrated that the main cause of that change was membership of the EU, which brought with it gains from trade, foreign direct investment, competition and innovation.

Professor Crafts says no one can know exactly how much the EU has benefited Britain, but a 10 per cent rise in prosperity is a reasonable estimate and even Patrick Minford has said that EU membership has benefited the British economy by freeing trade.

The net annual cost of EU membership is about £7 billion, less than half a per cent of national income — or about £260 a year for each British household. If Professor Crafts estimate is correct it would mean the net cost of leaving, per head, would be £4,940 a year. Such consequences would be as catastrophic as the German hyperinflation of the late 1920s. In a different estimate the Institute of Fiscal Studies suggests that by 2021 average earnings are set to be £1,400 lower in real terms and the Resolution Foundation said British people are now set to suffer their longest sustained period of falling living standards since records began in the 1950s. But it could even be a lot worse than that because these forecasts assume that the Brexit negotiations go smoothly.

One thing Minford is probably correct on is that these negative effects would not be evenly spread around the UK. Both the work of the UK Trade Policy Observatory at Sussex University and the Treasury/DExEU analysis confirm that it would be the North East of England and the West Midlands that would take the biggest hit.³⁰ Ironically these were, respectively, the first and third most heavily leave voting regions of the UK.

Predictions of future performance

In April 2016 the UK Treasury did publish an analysis of the economic impact of Brexit. It produced howls of derision from the pro-leave camp because their central estimate was a 6.2% fall in GDP equating to a loss of £4,300 per household. Headlines screamed:

‘Fury as scaremongering Osborne warns YOU “will be £4,300 WORSE OFF after Brexit”’ – *Daily Express*, 18 April 2016.

‘Osborne blasted over “absurd claim” Britain would be “permanently poorer” after Brexit’ – *Daily Express*, 18 April 2016.

In each case the claim, which was of course not Osborne’s at all but the collective view of the Treasury supported by pretty much every economist in the world, was presented overwhelmingly in

terms of negative or sceptical reactions. Being part of an overwhelming consensus didn't stop the right-wing press claiming it as a 'lie' comparable to Nazi propaganda.

'Trevor Kavanagh: With Project Fear in full flight, the Brexit "catastrophe" is a Hitler-style Big Lie' – the *Sun*, 22 April 2016

and

'George Osborne sets out economic case for Remain with boffins' baffling equations' – the *Sun*, 18 April 2016

Bereft of any logical arguments and without any credible economic analysis to back their side the Brexit press resorted to crude name calling, accusing Remain spokespeople of 'scaremongering' or including the phrase 'Project Fear' in every report. Overall, 64 articles carried headlines using one of these expressions. Of 38 articles with 'Project Fear' in the headline, 22 were published by the *Express*, with a further eight in the *Sun*.³¹

The same vilification has reoccurred since. When John Major spoke in favour of a free vote on the Brexit terms the *Daily Mail* called him a 'wife cheater', a 'sickly adulterer' and a 'sometime afternoon hip-jiggler' which they clearly thought was highly relevant to the ex-Prime Minister's arguments.³² There was, of course, no attempt made to counter Major's reasoning.

When the British economy didn't tank on 24 June 2016 the Brexiteers claimed this proved 'Project Fear' was an illusion. All the above scenarios are about after leaving, which is still around three years away (if one includes the 'transitional period'). The fact that the UK economy has continued to grow has been seized upon by the Brexit press as evidence that Project Fear was a lie. They ignore the fact that the world economy has been on a steep upward trend, that UK growth has slowed and, crucially, they fail to make comparisons. One is reminded of the Olympic commentaries of the past which always seemed to contain lines like 'and though he finished last and was lapped by the runner from Papua New Guinea the plucky Brit has improved his personal best by 0.1 of a second.'

What has happened is that in less than 18 months the UK moved from the fast lane of Europe and the global economy to the slow lane. In 2015 the UK topped the G7 growth table but is now bottom – behind the traditional laggards, Italy.³³ Say what you like about them but Blair and Brown and then Cameron and Osborne at least got Britain into the position of being one of the strongest-performing western economies in the 1990s and 2000s. Andrew Sentence, senior economic adviser at PwC and former member of the Bank of England's monetary policy committee, says that: 'It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Brexit process – which has added to investment uncertainty and squeezed consumers – is the main reason why the British economy is underperforming so badly at the moment.'³⁴

Another approach to this topic is that rather than making a set of assumptions which are bound to be controversial and using them to forecast the economic costs of Brexit, you can measure the actual output loss from the UK's decision to leave the EU. This is the approach taken by the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) at the London School of Economics. Since 2014 this research team has been studying the likely impact of the UK leaving the European Union, so much of their work pre-dates the decision even to hold a referendum.

Their approach does not depend on having the right model for the British, the European, or even the global economy. They do not assume a specific Brexit deal, or construct scenarios for the outcome of the negotiations. Instead they created a transparent, unbiased, and entirely-data driven 'Brexit cost tracker' that relies on synthetic control methods. They look at a range of options. Their 'optimistic'

scenario assumes the UK swiftly strikes a deal so that it gets deep access to the EU single market, like Norway. The ‘pessimistic’ scenario is where the UK is unwilling to accept the free movement of labour and associated regulations that are part of the ‘access price’ to the single market.

Their findings are that the difference in output between the UK economy and its synthetic doppelganger adds up to a loss of 1.3% of GDP, or close to £300 million per week, since the vote took place. This implies a cumulative cost of more than £60 billion by the end of 2018.³⁵ Under their ‘optimistic’ assumptions, there is then a further fall in national income of 1.3 per cent (about £850 per household). Under ‘pessimistic’ assumptions, this doubles to 2.6 per cent (£1,700 per household). When the dynamic effects of higher trade costs on productivity are included, the cost may rise to between 6.3 per cent (£4,119 per household) and 9.5 per cent (£6,212 per household) in the long run.³⁶

The following table summarises the LSE analysis:

Figure 4: Calculated effects of Brexit on UK living standards

	Optimistic	Pessimistic
Trade effects	-1.37 per cent	-2.92 per cent
Fiscal benefit	0.09 per cent	0.31 per cent
Total change in income per capita	-1.28 per cent	-2.61 per cent
Income change per household	-£850	-£1,700

Source: CEP Calculations (see Dhingra et al, 2016 for technical details). Income based on allocating GDP loss per household. For example, 1.3 per cent of UK GDP is £23 billion and there are about 27 million households.

Dr Angus Armstrong, Chief Economic Adviser to Lloyds Banking Group and formerly Head of Macroeconomic Analysis at the Treasury, and Jonathan Portes’ analysis is very similar. They modelled three scenarios: a ‘Norway’ scenario (EEA membership), a ‘Swiss’ scenario (EFTA with various EU bilateral agreements) and an ‘Island Nation’ scenario where we face WTO tariff conditions. ‘In the short term, we expect that a vote to leave would result in a significant economic downturn, with unemployment rising by up to 1.7 per cent... Over the long term, our results are somewhat less pessimistic than those of the Treasury or OECD, with the long-term hit to GDP ranging from about 1.5 to 3.7 per cent.’³⁷ Portes’ most recent publication has also included Theresa May’s ‘Bespoke’ deal outlined in her Mansion House speech of 2 March 2018. His table below is based on official government figures and the ‘options’ are:

- EEA – a ‘Norway-style’ deal
- FTA – a ‘Canada-style’ deal
- WTO – No deal
- Bespoke deal – May’s option³⁸

Figure 5: Economic Costs of Scenarios

	Net additional borrowing in 2033/34	Cost per week in 2033/34	Cost per week in 2018 prices (2033/34 deflated to take account of 25% growth)	Cost per week in 2018 prices (2033/34 deflated to take account of 25% growth)
EEA	£17 billion	£327 million	£262 million	9%
FTA	£57 billion	£1.1 billion	£877 million	31%
WTO	£81 billion	£1.56 billion	£1.25 billion	44%
Bespoke deal	£40 billion	£769 million	£615 million	22%

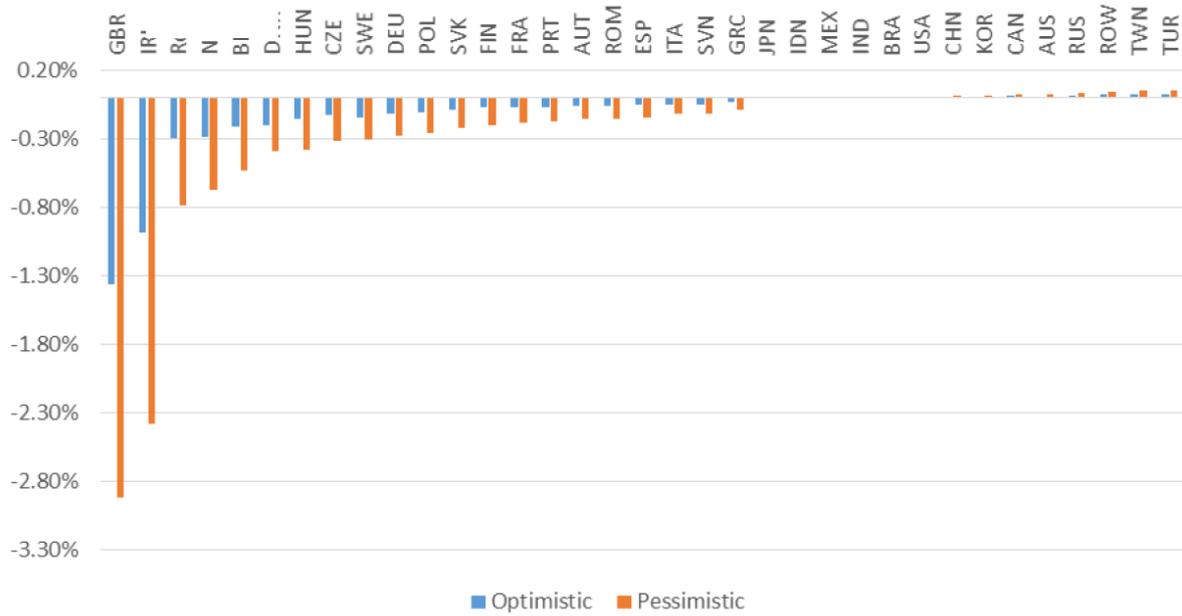
Source: Portes, Jonathan, 'Too High a Price: The cost of Brexit – what the public thinks', Global Future April 2018.

What this analysis reveals is that even the government's preferred scenario will cost the UK twice as much a week than the supposed 'Brexit bonus' of £350m promised on the famous Vote Leave bus.

The respected and non-politically aligned Rand Corporation in the USA have said that: 'The economic analysis shows that the UK will be economically worse-off outside of the EU under most plausible scenarios. The key question for the UK is how much worse-off it will be post-Brexit.'³⁹ They estimate that a no deal Brexit would take 4.7% out of the UK economy over 10 years and cost each person £1,585. It would also take until 2031 for any positive effects from regulatory divergence to have an impact.

But surely we will strike a good deal because we have heard quite a lot in the press and from pro-leave politicians about how the EU has more to lose than the UK if no trade deal is struck post-Brexit.⁴⁰ Some of these even quote the LSE research. The problem is, as is so often the case when statistics are quoted, that they fail to fully explain the meaning of the figures. It is quite true that the LSE research suggests that Brexit will cost more jobs in Europe than in the UK and that cumulatively living standards will be more adversely impacted. The spread is shown in the following table:

Figure 6: The effect of Brexit on living standards across EU countries



Source: CEP Calculations (see Dhingra et al, 2016 for technical details).

What the table shows is that though it may be true that collectively the EU would lose more than the UK from Brexit this is spread across 27 countries and therefore the impact in each is actually very small. The only one that would lose significantly other than the UK is Ireland.

The overall impact on the economy, if most economists are proved correct, will be a worsening of poverty and relative deprivation in the UK which has the greatest impact in leave-voting areas of England. Just how much worse is debated but whatever the extent it will place a greater burden on charity and philanthropy.

Sovereignty

Of the three issues this is the one that, at first glance, appears to stand up to objective scrutiny. If it is important to you that all (or at least as many as possible) legal decisions are made in the UK rather than in Brussels or, especially, in the much-despised European Court of Justice (ECJ) in Luxembourg, then voting to leave the EU was entirely logical. But there are a few complications.

First is how little Britain utilises the ECJ.

According to the 2016 ECJ annual report, between 1974 and 2016 the UK issued 612 preliminary rulings, where British judges asked the EU court to interpret EU law on their behalf. By comparison Denmark and Ireland, which joined the EU in the same year as the UK, used the same procedure 91 and 184 times respectively. However, per head of population Britain was well behind both with one ruling for every 107,000 Britons compared to one for every 62,000 Danes and one for every 25,000 Irish. So, in comparison Britain uses the ECJ half as often as Denmark and less than a quarter as much as Ireland. And British judges fell well short of their German and French counterparts, who asked 2,174 and 934 times respectively over the same time span.

But of course, Britain consistently loses in arguments with the EU doesn't it? Jacob Rees-Mogg has claimed: 'The UK consistently loses in the EU because other members favour a highly regulated and protectionist economy.'⁴¹ The truth is that since 1999 the UK has been in the minority (voting 'No') on 57 legislative acts. It has supported - and hence been in the majority - on 2,474 acts and abstained on 70 occasions. So, Britain wins in 98% of cases. Jacob Rees-Mogg is wrong and even the *Daily Telegraph* agrees.⁴²

Much more significant in relation to the Brexit vote is the confusion between the ECJ and the much better known European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). It is the latter that is usually the target of annoyance for Brexiteers. For example, it was the ECHR that provoked ire in 2012 when it blocked the deportation of Salafi cleric Abu Qatada to Jordan. But the ECHR is not an EU body and Britain will remain bound to its judgements after Brexit.

Perhaps it's not surprising that the public can't distinguish between these two bodies as even the Prime Minister suffers from the same difficulty. Professor Sir David Edward a former Judge of the ECJ, said it had been a mistake by the government to make the European Court of Justice a red line in the Brexit negotiations: 'Of course it was daft, frankly. The court of justice is not this big bogeyman. Why has Theresa May got this obsession in her head? Partly because she doesn't know the difference between the court of human rights and the court of justice.'⁴³ Remember before the referendum May was campaigning to stay in the EU but leave the jurisdiction of the ECHR.

Some of the confusion may come from the fact that the ECHR sits in Strasbourg which is also the seat of the European Parliament. However, a great deal of the confusion about which court is involved is deliberately fuelled by the media.

A good example of this was a two-page spread in the *Sun* on 10 February 2013. Headlined 'Youngsters at Risk after Ruling by Court' the sub-heading claimed: 'The EU could let fiends like [child killer Ian Huntley] prey on your children.' The EU had absolutely nothing to do with this judgment. It was taken in the British Court of Appeal and was about CRB checks and Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. And what proportion of *Sun* readers voted for Brexit? 70%, joint highest with readers of the *Daily* and *Sunday Express*. The latter produced a key report just after the referendum entitled 'REVEALED: The EU's top ten pointless decisions the UK can now get rid of'.⁴⁴ Though all related to the ECJ there were several that either were never enacted or were 'modified'

in the report. Remember these are the worst examples they could find. If they were got rid of then we will: be able to eat our pet horses; market prunes as having a laxative effect; call turnips swedes; buy washing up gloves that can't handle detergents and, of course, buy bendier bananas. We should be dancing in the streets at such freedom.

Sovereignty and trade

One Brexit argument is that even if there are negative effects on the economy what we can do with our newly won sovereignty is simply replace the EU Single Market with new trade agreements once we are free of the stultifying bureaucracy of Brussels. Well no.

For a start in any cross-border contract the parties must agree which legal jurisdiction will adjudicate in the event of problems. It is unlikely in the extreme that a British company trading with the EU would be able to use a British Court as the arbiter, and very few would have a problem with European Law being the final resort. But if, as the hard-line Brexiteers suggest, we 'fall back' on World Trade Organisation rules then any disputes concerning trade between the UK and the EU will be governed by the WTO, whose rules differ considerably from the current arrangements. Notably, businesses and individuals cannot themselves bring an action under the WTO dispute settlement procedures. Instead, they must lobby their governments to take action. A vastly more complex, costly and lengthy process.

The Brexiteers also claimed that getting out of Europe and negotiating an advantageous trade deal would be quick and simple.

Take John Redwood for example. In July 2016 he claimed: 'Getting out of the EU can be quick and easy – the UK holds most of the cards in any negotiation.'⁴⁵ I don't think even he can say it is proving to be easy and we will be paying the exit bill until 2064.⁴⁶ If I get the chance I would love to invite Redwood round for a high-stakes game of poker.

Then the day before the referendum this is what Boris Johnson had to say on the subject:

'Of course EU countries will continue trading with us on a tariff-free basis — they would be damaging their own commercial interests if they didn't. That's why EU politicians would be banging down the door for a trade deal on Friday.'⁴⁷

Friday arrived, and Britain's door remained entirely undamaged.

And when he took up office David Davis suggested the government would be able to easily negotiate new free trade agreements and Liam Fox claimed: 'Britain is going to be open for business like never before, and we will use our new found position outside the EU to become the world's brightest beacon and champion of open trade.'⁴⁸

It is not heartening that the two men in charge of Britain's future trading relationship with the rest of the world appear to think that 'trade' still resembles that conducted by the first British explorers to Africa or North America – exchanging trinkets for valuable local resources when, surprisingly, most 'trade', especially in the UK, doesn't involve any physical exchange of goods but is undertaken in high-tech offices, utilising cutting-edge IT systems. As Dr Matthew Bishop, Senior Lecturer in International Politics at Sheffield University has suggested, many people, politicians and pundits simply do not comprehend modern trade politics.

'For them, trade is still about staple goods going back and forth between sovereign countries. But today 80 per cent of trade takes place in global value chains (GVCs) controlled by multinational firms and dense webs of public and private regulation. Much trade involves

the exchange – often within firms or between them and their affiliates – of services, data, money (and even labour) that do not cross physical borders or transit through ports where tariffs could be levied.

The Global Value Chains in which Britain operates are overwhelmingly in services, which depend even less on the tariffs that feature in the pronouncements by Brexiters regarding prosecco or cheese, and even more on the kinds of deep “behind the border” regulation ... and new generation trade agreements like the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) or, of course, the EU single market itself.

These “deep” trade agreements are barely about tariffs at all, they are overwhelmingly geared towards eliminating non-tariff barriers and, crucially, harmonising the regulations under which GVCs operate.’⁴⁹

Another fallacy is that firms are desperate to slash red tape and burdensome rules, even though ‘the UK already has one of the OECD’s least regulated product and labour markets.’⁵⁰ For most UK firms it is the advanced, extensive regulation provided by contemporary trade agreements that confers market power on them by raising the barriers to entry for weaker competitors. Any lessening of regulation is likely to be counterproductive as the LSE economists explain:

‘We often hear by Eurosceptics that “the 100 most burdensome EU regulations have been estimated to impose annual costs of £33.3 billion”. But what they neglect to mention is that the government impact assessments they cite also estimate that the same 100 regulations bring benefits to Britain of £58.6 billion per year!’⁵¹

The kind of bonfire of EU red tape that Brexiteers have long fantasised about will, instead, undermine, not facilitate, the free trade that they claim to stand for.

Ultimately though on what predicates does the very concept of ‘sovereignty’ depend? It comes back to the idea that nations are a ‘natural’ phenomena that, in this case, the British ‘nation’ should be the final arbiter of laws in this country rather than an ‘unelected bureaucracy in Brussels’. But why is Britain the ‘natural’ and therefore sovereign entity in this? What about the ‘sovereignty’ of Scotland, or Ireland, or Cornwall or London for that matter? The concept of ‘Britishness’ is, as is always the case with nationalism, impossible to determine. A classic example was Norman Tebbit’s ‘cricket test’ for immigrants. Tebbit based his definition of who qualified as ‘British’ on which team a person supported when England played India or the West Indies. This presumably excluded Scots, who would be unlikely to support England, plus, of course, all those completely uninterested in cricket. He has since updated his test in relation to the Brexit debate to a ‘World War II’ test asking: ‘Who did they fight for in the Second World War?’⁵² So, according to Tebbit, Poles and Czechs are our ‘natural’ partners but not Finns or Italians.

The worry for charity and philanthropy once Britain becomes free of the ECJ is that a future government could seek to pass laws which repeal or weaken our current rights by scrapping ‘inconvenient’ rules such as the following, all of which derive from EU law:

- data protection: including protections for individuals around the information held about them;
- human trafficking: including protections for victims of trafficking;
- disability rights: including protections at work;
- workplace discrimination: including the working time directive and protection on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age and

- equal pay: making sure that men and women receive equal pay for equal work.

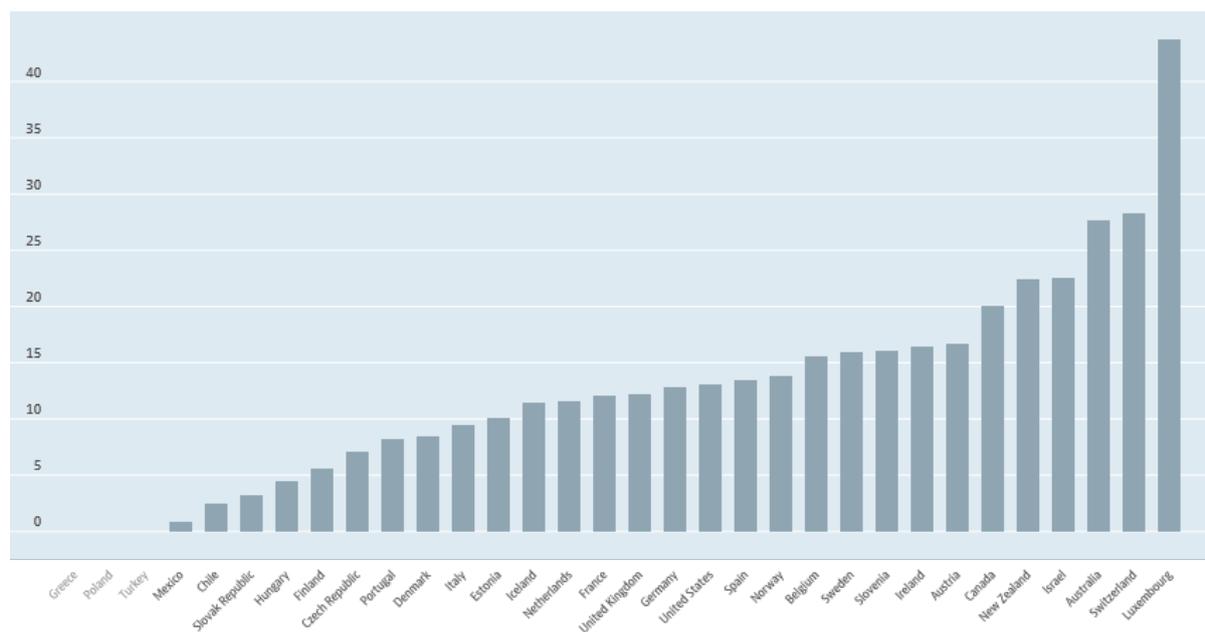
Ultimately, the sovereignty sought by Brexiteers is an illusion. In our modern globalised world every country has to cede some degree of sovereignty when they make a trade or other international deal. With Brexit all the UK will be doing in the Brexiteers plan will be exchanging the limited sovereignty we have ceded to the EU for an unknown degree of sovereignty surrendered to countries such as China, Saudi Arabia or even Russia.

Brexit, immigration and xenophobia

As we have seen economists are, perhaps for the first time, virtually united in pointing out that the economic case for Brexit is, to say the least, rather slim. Hardly any well-argued economic reason could be given by the Brexit camp as to why it is a good idea to leave the EU, and the consequences could be severe. The lack of economic argument in favour of Brexit, which should have been the key battleground in the referendum, led the debate to focus instead on one specific issue, immigration.

First a reality check. Britain doesn't have a high proportion of immigrants in relation to other countries. This is the percentage of foreign-born population in selected countries in 2013:

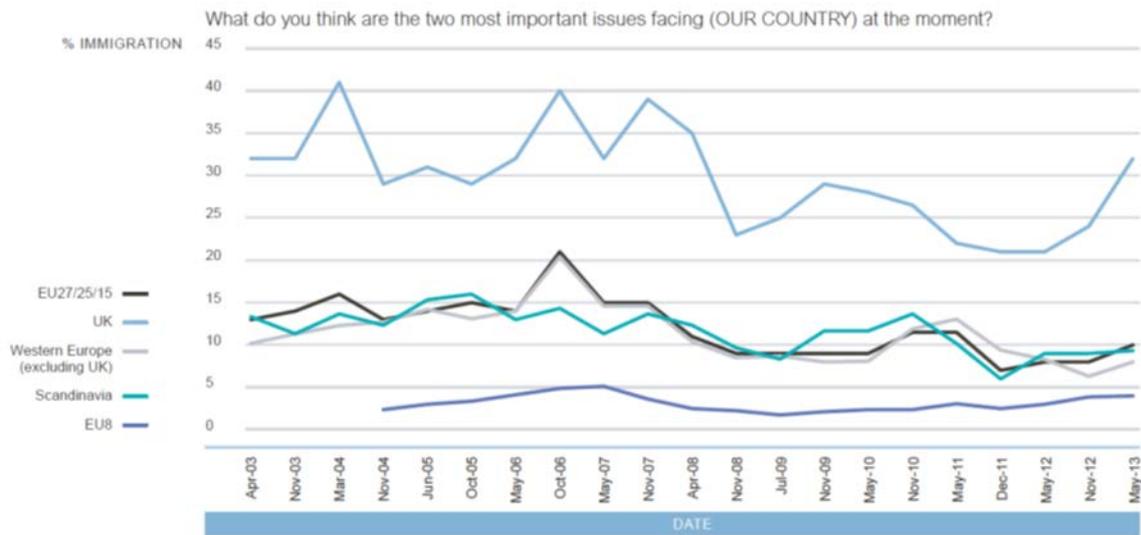
Figure 7: Percentage of foreign-born population in selected countries 2013



Source: Source: International migration database⁵³

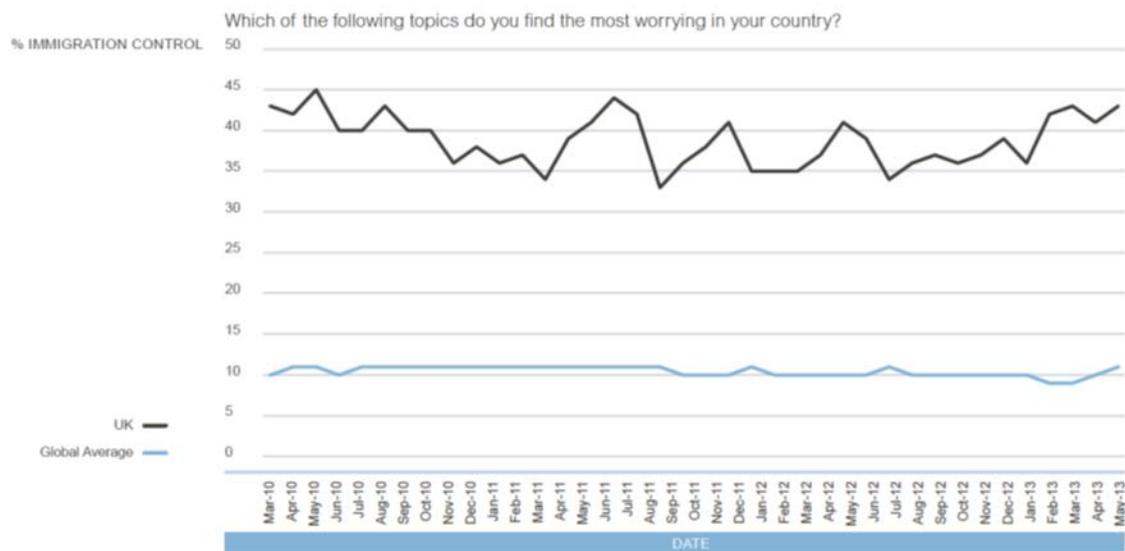
But despite having fewer immigrants Britons consistently rate immigration far more highly as an 'issue' than other countries, both in the EU and worldwide:

Figure 8: Importance of immigration among Britons compared with other people in Europe



Source: Duffy, Bobby and Tom Frere-Smith, 'Perceptions and Reality: Public attitudes to immigration', Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute, 2014 p 10

Figure 9: Concern about immigration control among Britons compared with people from other parts of the world



Source: Duffy, Bobby and Tom Frere-Smith, 'Perceptions and Reality: Public attitudes to immigration', Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute, 2014 p 12

Because their arguments on the economy were so weak and they knew that Britons have a distorted and over-blown view of immigration the Leave campaign and their media supporters selected immigration as the main battle ground.

‘The advantage for the Leave campaign of giving prominence to immigration was clearly set out by Sir Lynton Crosby in an article for the *Daily Telegraph* a few days after the official campaign began. “Currently 41 per cent of the British population would vote Leave,” he wrote. “But 52 per cent of the British population say that leaving the EU would improve the UK’s immigration system. There is therefore a misalignment.” To win over the other 11%,

Leave would need to make immigration a greater issue than it already was, Crosby suggested. That is what happened, and Leave's share of the vote rose to 52% on 23 June.⁵⁴

There are basically two reasons why one might oppose immigration: rational and irrational. The irrational reason is outright prejudice whereas the rational reason is the one that states that immigration has had a negative social and economic impact on the UK. Indeed, 'the Leave campaign emphasized the economic threat that immigrants pose to British nationals. In addition, it framed the principles pursued by the E.U. as not complying with traditional British values.'⁵⁵

It is this economic argument that is most often put forward by pro-Leave individuals with the suggestion 'that migration resulting from EU membership was putting pressure on, or threatening, public services.'⁵⁶

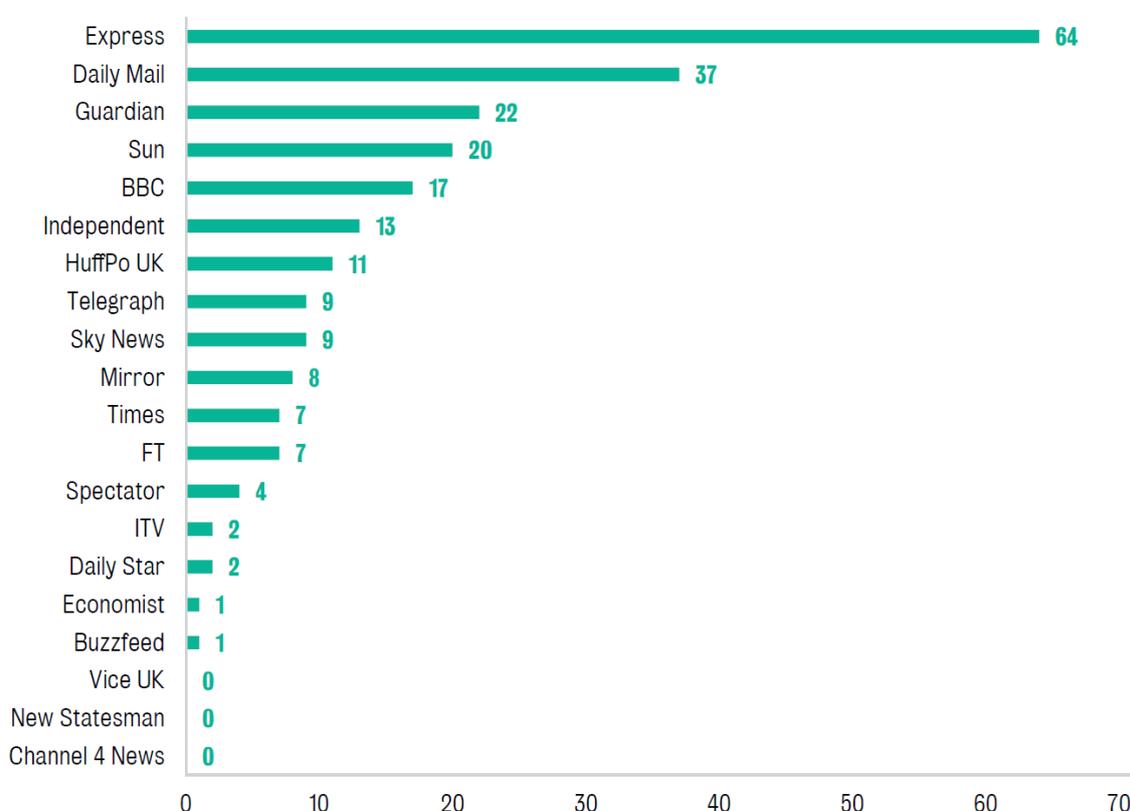
For example:

'Voters know from bitter experience that when too many people are allowed to settle in this country, the result is downward pressure on wages and intolerable strain on public services, including health, housing and schools' – *Daily Mail*, 1 June 2016.

'We needn't look far for the explanation. For not only is the euro destroying livelihoods, but the madness that is the free movement of peoples has brought waves of migrants sweeping across Europe, depressing wages, putting immense strain on housing and public services, undermining our security against criminals and terrorists — and making communities fear for their traditional ways of life' – *Daily Mail*, 21 June 2016

Leaving aside the second piece's deliberate confusion of migration into the EU with EU immigration to Britain this attitude is also backed up by statistical analysis. And it is not just the right-leaning media that connect immigration with pressure on public services:

Figure 10: Articles mentioning the economy and containing the explicit argument that EU migration creates pressures on public services (all publications 15 April - 23 June 2016)



Source: Moore, Martin and Gordon Ramsay 'UK media coverage of the 2016 EU Referendum campaign', Centre for the Study of Media, Communication and Power, King's College London, May 2017 p 61

The argument of the leavers is, of course, that their opposition to immigration is therefore entirely rational and that the vote had no connection to racism or xenophobia. But is immigration really bad for Britain?

Is immigration bad for Britain?

There has been a significant amount of research about the impact of immigration in many different countries and the UK in particular, as Jonathan Portes has noted:

'There is now a considerable literature on the impact on the UK economy and labour market [of immigration]. To the considerable surprise of many economists, including this author, there is now a clear consensus that even in the short term EU migration does not appear to have had a negative impact on the employment outcomes of UK natives. A comprehensive literature review by the UK government (Home Office and BIS, 2014) found that "To date there has been little evidence in the literature of a statistically significant impact from EU migration on native employment outcomes".'⁵⁷

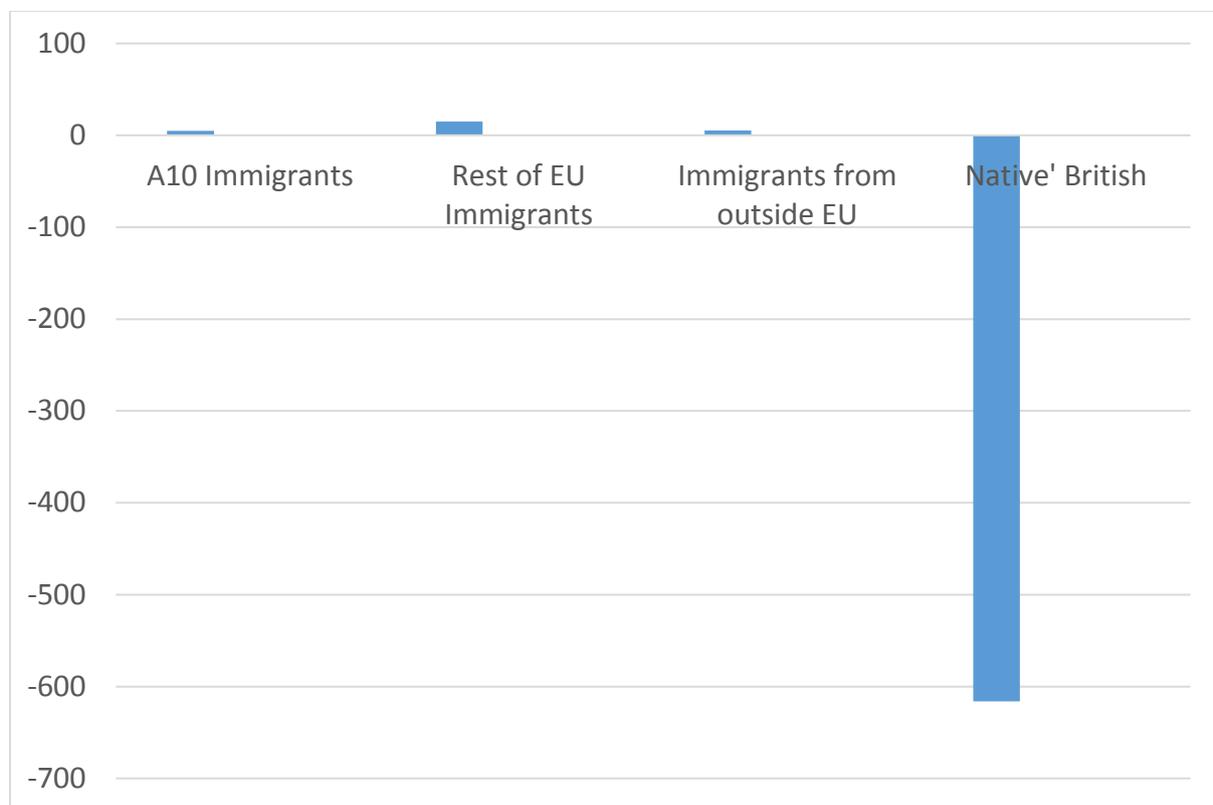
Even the pro-Brexit Migration Watch, whose evidence is, at best, described as 'partial', admit that 'the impact of immigration into the UK on GDP per head is essentially negligible.'⁵⁸

The most comprehensive study on this topic was carried out in 2014 by Christian Dustmann and Tommaso Frattini of the Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration at University College

London.⁵⁹ Their work demonstrates that – rather than being a drain on the UK’s fiscal system – immigrants arriving since the early 2000s have made a net contribution to its public finances, a reality that contrasts starkly with the view often maintained in public debate.

Between 2001 and 2011 recent immigrants from A10 countries, the Eastern and Central European countries that joined the EU since 2004, contributed about 12% more than they took out, with a net fiscal contribution of about £5 billion. At the same time the net contributions of recent immigrants from the rest of the EU totalled another £15 billion, with fiscal payments about 64% higher than transfers received. Immigrants from outside the EU, though still positive in their contribution, were far less so than those from within it. Non-EU migrants made a net contribution of about £5.2 billion, thus paying into the system about 3% more than they took out. Over the same period, native Britons made an overall negative contribution of £616.5 billion. This negative contribution is not surprising because so many of them are either too young or too old to be economically productive. The net fiscal balance of overall immigration to the UK between 2001 and 2011 amounts to a positive net contribution of about £25 billion, over a period when the UK has run an overall budget deficit.

Figure 11: Net contribution to UK economy by immigrants and natives since 2001 £billions

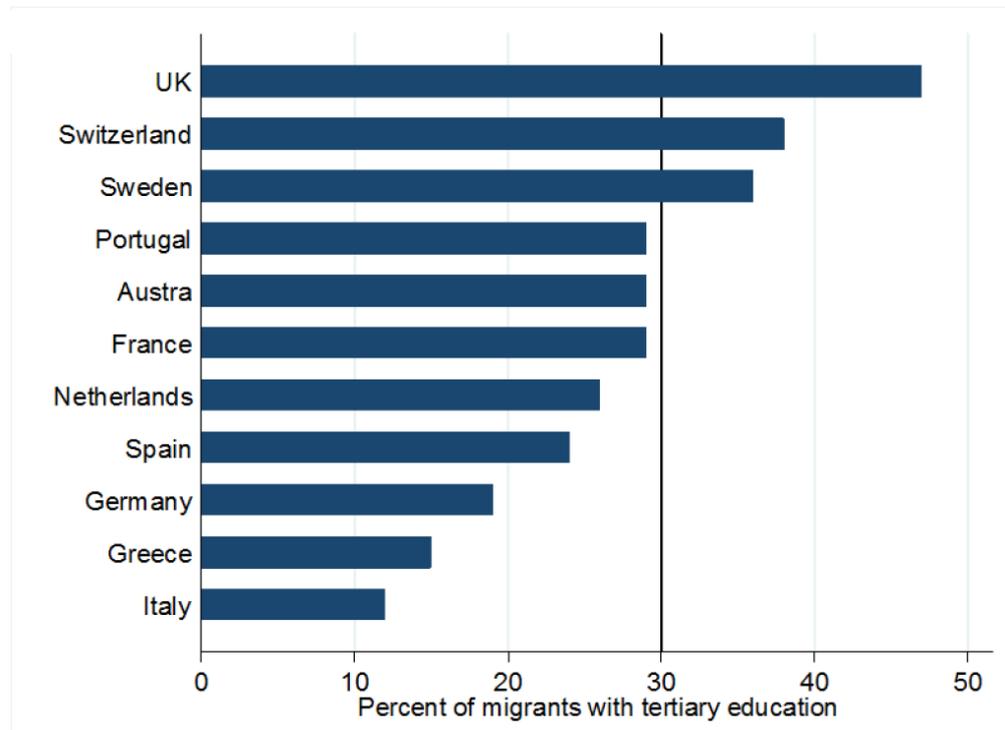


Source: Dustmann, Christian, and Tommaso Frattini. "The fiscal effects of immigration to the UK." *The Economic Journal* (2014).

This positive contribution of immigrants is further supported by evidence on the degree to which they receive tax credits and benefits compared with natives. Recent immigrants are 43% (17 percentage points) less likely to receive state benefits or tax credits. These differences are again partly attributable to immigrants’ more favourable age-gender composition. However, even when compared with natives of the same age-gender composition, and education, recent immigrants are still 39% less likely than natives to receive benefits.⁶⁰

Furthermore, most immigrants arrive in the UK after completing their education abroad, and thus at a point in their life where their contribution to the economy is at its most positive, a fact that is often neglected in the debate about the costs and benefits of immigration. If the UK had to provide each immigrant with the level of education they had acquired in their home country, the costs would be substantial. Estimates indicate that between 2000 and 2011 immigrants endowed the country with productive human capital that would have cost the UK £6.8 billion in education spending. And the UK is the biggest beneficiary in Europe of this ‘brain drain’:

Figure 12: Share of immigrants with tertiary education in selected EU countries 2015



Source: EUROSTAT⁶¹

If one looks more broadly at the impacts of immigration across the world they are remarkably close to what I’d suggest is ‘common sense’. The immediate short run effects of immigration on the wages and employment of existing workers depends most upon the extent to which migrants have skills that are substitutes or complements to those of existing workers. If the skills of migrants and existing workers are substitutes (i.e. there are plenty of people in the country who already have these skills), immigration can be expected to increase competition in the labour market and drive down wages in the short run. The closer the substitute, the greater the adverse wage effects will be. If, on the other hand, the skills of migrants are complementary to those of existing workers, all workers experience increased productivity which will lead to a rise in the wages of existing workers.⁶²

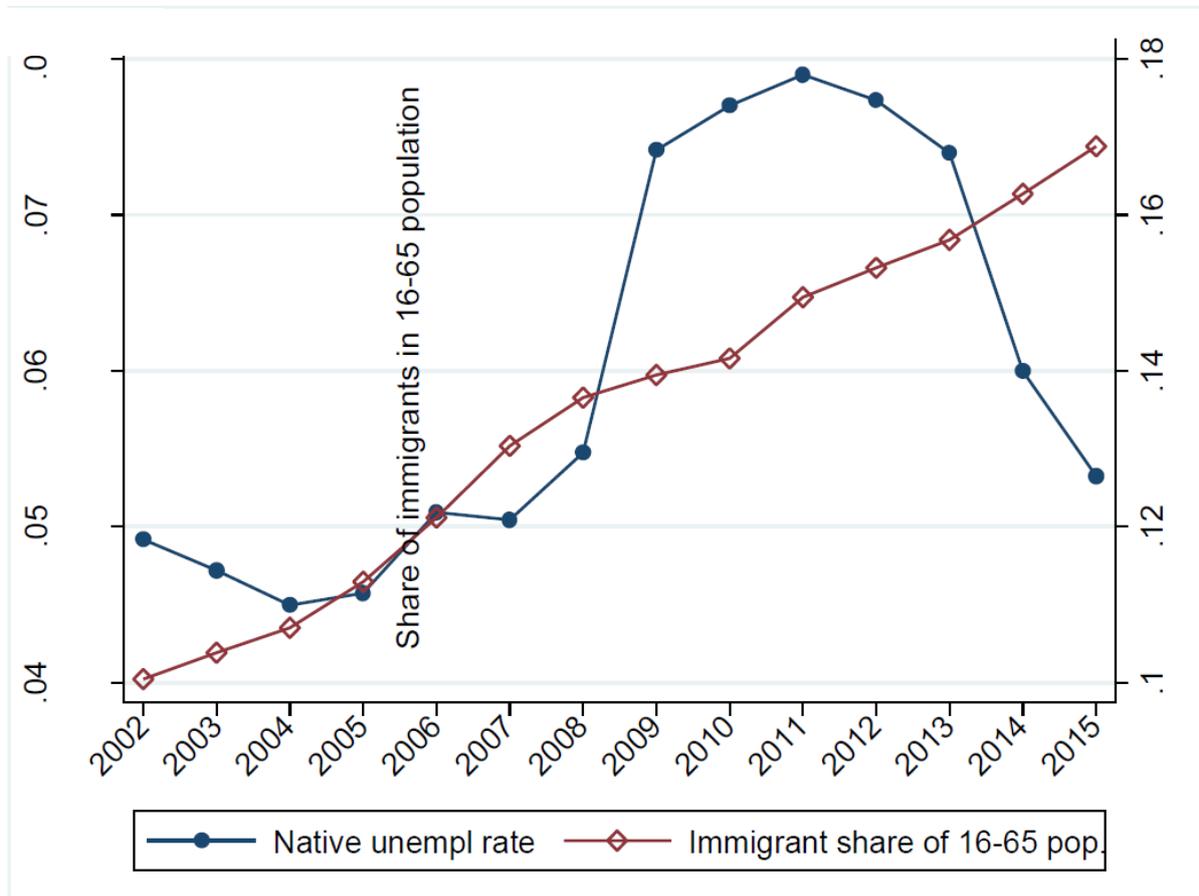
‘Substitution immigration’ is most likely to occur in unregulated circumstances where the ‘push factors’ i.e. negative factors that mitigate against a person remaining in their country of origin are greater than ‘pull factors’ – positive reasons for going to a new country. The most obvious are where war or other disruption leads to large numbers of refugees or where a comparatively rich country adjoins a comparatively poor one (the USA and Mexico being perhaps the clearest example). As an island adjoining other comparatively rich countries Britain receives very few substitute immigrants –

which is why stories about camps in Calais or migrants in the back of lorries receive such significant media attention, because they are so rare and insignificant.

Further evidence for this is provided by the total lack of correlation between EU immigration and unemployment. After the 2008 recession unemployment in the UK among 'natives' increased, but from 2011 fell again. Immigration continued to rise throughout this period. Unemployment has dropped quite dramatically since 2011, despite an increase in immigration. That must mean that more jobs have been created than those that went to the newly arrived.

Two facts are remarkable in this series. First, the stock of immigrants continued to grow throughout the great recession at basically the same pace as before. Second, the extraordinary ability of the British economy to create jobs after the recession. Will it show the same resilience after Brexit, especially if immigration drops? Jonathan Portes and Giuseppe Forte are doubtful: 'Brexit-induced reductions in migration are likely to have a significant negative impact on UK GDP per capita ... with marginal positive impacts on wages in the low-skill service sector.'⁶³

Figure 13: Native unemployment and working age immigration



Source: UK Labour Force Survey

And if final proof is required here is the official view of the UK government in 2014, which has, surprisingly been little quoted: 'To date there has been little evidence in the literature of a statistically significant impact from EU migration on native employment outcomes.'⁶⁴ The only reference to this comprehensive review by the Home Office and Department for Business and Skills was in the Swiss newspaper Neue Zürcher Zeitung.

So why, given the plethora of research, is there a persistent belief that immigration is harmful to the economy?

Firstly there are, as we've seen, the reasons given for opposing immigration: its negative impact on jobs, public services and housing. In reality none of these is impacted at all significantly by immigration. Yet overall immigration is often seen as the cause of the problems when it is only a symptom of a far more complex set of economic and social circumstances, including significant cuts to public services. To take an historical example. Poor Jewish and Irish immigrants didn't cause the decline of Spitalfields in London's East End in the 19th century, the decline was due to the collapse of its economy, based on silk weaving, which depressed property prices, which was exploited by landlords, which lowered rents and meant that, as a result, poor immigrants moved into the area.

The second is due to public misconceptions about who the majority of immigrants are. These mean that many think the average 'immigrant' is a refugee from Syria when they are most likely to be a graduate student from Poland.⁶⁵ People underestimate groups they are least worried about (such as students) and overestimate groups they are more worried about (such as asylum seekers). This means that 'even if we could convince people to trust a picture of immigration that doesn't fit with their mental image, it is questionable whether it would greatly shift views.'⁶⁶

The third has to do with the 'lump of labour' fallacy as Paul Johnson and Ian Mitchell suggest: 'There is clearly a widespread belief in the "lump of labour" fallacy, in the idea that immigration harms job prospects.'⁶⁷ The lump of labour fallacy is the idea that there is a fixed amount of work - a lump of labour - to be done within an economy which is then distributed to create more or fewer jobs. It was proved to be a fallacy as far back as 1891 by economist David Frederick Schloss, who demonstrated that the amount of work in an economy is not fixed. However, a bit like a belief in creationism or the deterrent effect of capital punishment, the lump of labour fallacy is hard to shift and gets endlessly repeated by both politicians and the media. Educationalists and their philanthropic supporters would certainly have a ready partner in the economics profession should a campaign to educate the public on the realities of basic economics be contemplated.

Based on these fallacies most Britons want the government to adopt an immigration policy which would be ruinous for the UK economy and not even Patrick Minford supports. 58% of those who expressed a view believe there should either be no net migration (thus leaving policy to be driven by the vagaries of emigration from the UK) or no immigration at all. On this basis the UK would, for example, have no nurses within 15 years.⁶⁸

The deeply ingrained negative perception of immigration in the UK led the Remain campaign to be exceptionally 'lily livered' on this point: 'Remain, rather than seeking to argue for the benefits of immigration to the UK or the positive case for free movement of people within Europe, chose first to play down the issue, then to emphasise their proposals to reduce migrant numbers.'⁶⁹

When they were truthful they found themselves reported with total incredulity. On 15 May 2016 one headline screamed: 'Corbyn insists immigration is a GOOD thing and claims it's the Government's fault for not funding councils, schools and doctors properly when services are overstretched' and that 'He said migration was a "plus to the economy as a whole" in TV interview.'⁷⁰ All the Labour leader had done was accurately summarise the widely accepted economic view that immigration to the UK has a negligible impact on public services and that from the EU benefits the economy.

Whatever rules the UK adopts, immigration to the UK will be impacted by one key factor – the strength of the economy. If the UK economy is strong and growing there will be a continued need for

immigrants, unless there is an existing surplus of people with these skills already in the UK. But if, as looks much more likely, the economy goes into decline fewer people will come to the UK. Paradoxically this will be hailed by the Brexiteers as a triumph for their views, but it will in fact be a condemnation. Let's look at an example in the NHS.

10% of doctors and 7% of nurses in the UK are EU nationals. A further 16% of doctors and 9% of nurses come from outside the EU and overall only 64% of doctors were trained in the UK. For EU nationals these figures have risen significantly in recent years. The proportion of EU doctors has gone up from 6.8% in 2009 to 9.8% in 2017 and, in the same period, the proportion of nurses from 2.8 to 7.3%.⁷¹

If we return to the research on immigration and education, we find an economic explanation for these statistics. It is much cheaper for the UK economy to import fully trained doctors and nurses from abroad than to train them here and training places in the UK are artificially capped by the government. In 2017, 19,210 applicants applied for just under 6,000 medical school places meaning that many would-be doctors from the UK either have to go abroad to train or choose a different profession instead. Though the government has recently announced an increase (still only to 7,500) BMA medical students committee co-chairman Harrison Carter said: 'The students who will benefit from these new placements will take at least 10 years to train and become senior doctors, so we mustn't forget this promise won't tackle the immediate shortage of doctors in the NHS which could become more acute following Brexit.'⁷²

What will happen? Either a catastrophic shortage of doctors and nurses for the next 10 years at least; or a complete relaxation of immigration rules for medical staff. The problem is that doctors and nurses from the EU are still unlikely to come because their immigration status will be compromised if freedom of movement is curtailed for new immigrants.

The above scenario is already proving correct. In 2016 the number of nurses from the EU registering to work in the UK fell by a staggering 96%, from 1,304 to just 46 and there is now a shortage of 30,000 nurses in England alone.⁷³ In addition 3,962 EU nurses left the UK, a 300% increase on the 2014 figure.⁷⁴ So it may already be too late to avoid a disastrous shortage of doctors and nurses.

Collective Narcissism

What is 'collective narcissism'?

As objective evidence is lacking to support the idea of immigration being a 'bad thing' then what else drives it?

Recent psychological studies of referendum voters have demonstrated that a key variable at play in the vote was xenophobia.⁷⁵ The studies demonstrate that support for the outcome of the EU referendum was linked to psychological factors and individual predictors of prejudice toward foreigners namely:

- Right wing authoritarianism;
- Social dominance orientation and
- Collective narcissism.

Right wing authoritarians are those who obey authority and social conventions and reject dissenters. People with a high social dominance orientation are those who want to maintain group-based hierarchies. Collective narcissism was the strongest predictor. These are people who believe in their nation's unparalleled greatness. The term 'collective narcissism' was first proposed by the psychoanalyst Erich Fromm and sociologist Theodore Adorno to describe the sentiment that gave support to Nazi rule in Germany in the 1930s.⁷⁶

Collective narcissism is different to individual narcissism and is characterised by some of the following beliefs:

Figure 14: Collective Narcissism Scale

<i>Instruction: Please think about (the name of the group) while responding to the items of the scale. 1 = Totally disagree to 6 = Totally agree</i>
I wish other groups would more quickly recognize the authority of my group.
My group deserves special treatment.*
I will never be satisfied until my group gets the recognition it deserves.*
I insist upon my group getting the respect that is due to it.
It really makes me angry when others criticize my group.*
If my group had a major say in the world, the world would be a much better place.*
I do not get upset when people do not notice the achievements of my group. (reversely coded)
Not many people seem to fully understand the importance of my group.*
The true worth of my group is often misunderstood.
<i>*Items with asterisk form a shorter version of the Collective Narcissism Scale</i>

Source: Golec de Zavala, Agnieszka, et al. "Collective narcissism and its social consequences." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 97.6 (2009): 1074-96.

Collective narcissism, nationalism and aggression

Collective narcissism is a broader concept than blind patriotism and quite different from other kinds of national pride. Positive feelings about one's own country can bring many benefits and feeling a strong sense of identification with a larger group can be a constructive aspect of social capital. People can find great purpose and meaning in doing things for the greater good of their group, and healthy patriotism is associated with more tolerance and understanding of other nationalities.⁷⁷ What makes collective narcissism distinct is its defensive and paranoid tone, and the insatiable desire for due recognition from others.⁷⁸ Studies of social capital have demonstrated that an excess of bonding capital (social ties that link people together with others who are primarily like them) over bridging capital (ties that link people together across divisions in society) can lead to conflict and exclusion and collective narcissism is an extreme form of excessive bonding social capital without any balancing element of bridging.⁷⁹

Collective narcissists are not defined by political orientation – there are collective narcissists on the left and the right. However, because they need a strong group association they are more likely to identify with a nation and a right-wing mentality.⁸⁰ For example a recent study by Oxford University has demonstrated that extremist, sensationalist and conspiratorial news in the USA was overwhelmingly consumed and shared by right wing social network users. 'Junk political news and information was concentrated among Trump's supporters' whereas Democratic supporters showed high levels of engagement with mainstream media sources.⁸¹

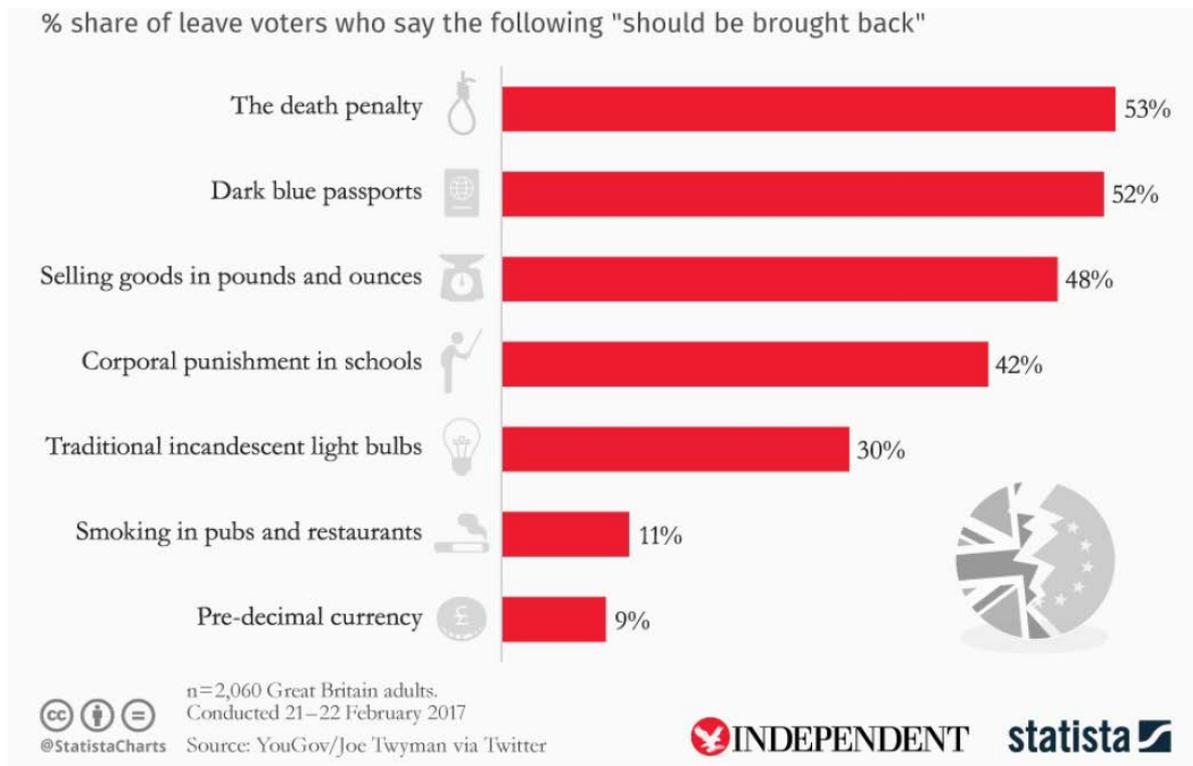
Collective narcissists are far more likely to believe conspiracy theories and to desire revenge on anyone who doesn't sufficiently recognise their group, but the trait is also 'accompanied by unacknowledged doubts about the in-group's greatness and a belief that the in-group is not sufficiently recognized by others.'⁸² Collective narcissists 'require constant validation of unrealistic greatness of the self' and 'are likely to continually encounter threats to their self image and be chronically intolerant of them... They are likely to interpret even ambiguous actions and opinions of an out-group as threatening the inflated image of the in-group.'⁸³

Collective narcissists are thus quick to insult even where no insult is intended as Dr Golec de Zavala and her colleagues found: 'For example, for a transgression as petty as a joke made by a celebrity about their country's government, people in our study threatened physical punishment and engaged in schadenfreude, openly rejoicing in the misfortunes of their "offender".'⁸⁴

This means collective narcissists have a more pessimistic outlook and wish misfortune on others who they see as having unfair privileges. They are more likely to support capital punishment and the use of torture against perceived enemies; to yearn for the return of some mythical past when the in-group was supposedly in the ascendancy and also to have exaggerated attachment to symbols of the in-group that others would consider trivial.

These very elements were emphasised in a poll by YouGov in March 2017 which asked Leave voters what they most looked forward to bringing back after Brexit. These were the results:⁸⁵

Figure 15: What Leave voters want to happen in UK after Brexit



Statista

Source: Kentish, Ben and Peter Walker, 'Half of Leave voters want to bring back the death penalty after Brexit', the *Independent*, 29 March 2017

The only thing missing was the time machine to transport them.

One recent paper on collective narcissism covered five studies across four countries (the UK, Turkey, Portugal and Poland) all of which confirmed the link between the trait and 'in-group exaggerated greatness'.⁸⁶ The results of the five studies indicate that collective, but not individual, narcissism predicts intergroup aggressiveness. Though collective narcissism is 'positively related to individual narcissism, social dominance orientation, right wing authoritarianism, blind patriotism, and ingroup identification'⁸⁷ collective narcissism 'predicts perceived threat from outgroups, unwillingness to forgive outgroups, preference for military aggression over and above social dominance orientation, right-wing authoritarianism, and blind patriotism... In sum, the results indicate that collective narcissism is a form of high but ambivalent group esteem related to sensitivity to threats to the ingroup's image and retaliatory aggression.'⁸⁸

This means that 'those high in collective narcissism react to ingroup image threat with retaliatory intergroup hostility.'⁸⁹ Modern social media provides an immediate outlet for such aggression.

The ultimate danger of collective narcissism is that 'in certain conditions narcissistic identification with the in-group may become a social norm. In such conditions introducing even untrue and illogical rumors of intergroup threat may have tragic intergroup consequences'.⁹⁰ The link to 'fake news' and 'alternative facts' is obvious, and a recent example in the United States was when Edgar Welch fired an assault rifle inside a Washington pizza restaurant, believing internet rumours that prominent Democrats were harbouring child sex slaves there.⁹¹

Collective narcissism and Brexit

One of the studies that examined the implications of collective narcissism in the context of voting showed that it predicted support for Donald Trump in the 2016 Presidential election over and above any of the demographic or other variables including authoritarianism and national identification.⁹²

Marchlewska et al demonstrate how populists, like Trump, Marine Le Pen or Nigel Farage, combine anti-elitism with a conviction that they hold a superior vision of what it means to be a true citizen of their nation. Their study also found that: 'Although it was initially thought that poor economic conditions might be responsible for the recent rise of populism, evidence for the role of economic hardship is mixed.'⁹³

Marchlewska et al looked at three examples of 'populism in action'. The first studied support for the right-wing Law and Justice party in Poland; the second looked at voting for Donald Trump and the third concentrated on the Brexit referendum. The British study examined 525 participants recruited seven weeks before the referendum and all three studies demonstrated that national collective narcissism is a robust predictor of adopting populist views: 'These associations were present even when we controlled for conventional national identification.'⁹⁴

Further work by a group at Cambridge University has linked Brexit voters with support for authoritarian and nationalistic ideological stances.⁹⁵ This study links these views with an 'inflexible' or 'persistent' cognitive style, epitomised by, for example, persistent adherence to rules and a greater reliance on routine and tradition.

The studies demonstrate how the nature of collective narcissism makes it self-re-enforcing and not susceptible to reasoned argument, indeed reasoned argument with collective narcissists may be counter-productive. For example, arguing that immigrants contribute positively to the economy may simply threaten and enrage them. Equally, the more populist leaders and their supporting media suggest the national group is under threat, the more this re-enforces the beliefs of collective narcissists and makes them more likely to retaliate violently.

The combination of these research studies shows that collective narcissism explains much of the variance in the perceived threat of immigrants and support for the Brexit vote over and above other previously examined predictors such as age, education, ethnicity or, contrary to what many people (both journalists and academics) have said, economic disadvantage.

The studies also showed that national identification (how important it is for people to be members of the national group) and national attachment (how attached and positive people feel about their national group) were not related to rejection of immigrants or the Brexit vote. It was only when these were exaggerated to the extent of the three traits of right wing authoritarianism, social dominance orientation and, especially, collective narcissism, that the correlation was significant.

Overall 'collective narcissists voted to leave the European Union because they feared and rejected immigrants. Those who were proud but not narcissistic about being British, voted to remain because they saw their country as indispensable in defining the European Union's identity.'⁹⁶

An important question to ask is whether the number of people strongly demonstrating collective narcissistic traits was sufficient to make a difference in the Brexit referendum. Dr Golec de Zavala explains that:

'People differ in the intensity with which they hold those beliefs. The distribution of how strongly they hold [them] will follow the "normal curve"-like distribution of any other individual difference variable in the population. This means that 68% of a population will be

close to the scale's mean and 95% will be within one standard deviation from the mean. So, 2.5% of a population will hold those beliefs really strongly.⁹⁷

Whilst this doesn't necessarily prove that this 2.5% all voted leave (or even voted at all) it is a telling figure given the closeness of the result.

Looking at the evidence, whilst it is not correct to say that all of the 52% of people who voted for Brexit are xenophobes the studies on collective narcissism suggest that a significant minority of Brexit voters are 'cognitively xenophobic' and their votes may have been decisive in the referendum.

I'm sorry to say that, whatever politicians, the press or your mate who voted leave say, the currently most reliable evidence is that the Brexit vote was indeed significantly a xenophobic vote, and this has profound implications for the democratic process.

But does the fact that extreme collective narcissists are virtually impervious to reasoned argument mean nothing can be done to change opinion? Dr Golec de Zavala has also explained that: 'The tipping point, as always, were rather the people in the middle of the scale. Their beliefs are the most likely to be swayed to one or the other side by the efficient campaign.'⁹⁸ And other studies have revealed that the proportions of people in a population holding blindly patriotic or nationalistic views does vary over time.⁹⁹

As we have noted it would be very difficult to engage in dialogue with people who are extreme collective narcissists, but reasoned argument and debate may well be more effective with those closer to the middle of the scale and may have the ability to modify their views.

The threat to democracy and philanthropy's response

Reinforcing xenophobia

The work of Golec de Zavala, Marchlewska and others 'suggests that the narrative of relative disadvantage of their "in group", fuelled by populist leaders, encourages defensive and destructive national in-group positivity.'¹⁰⁰

Even if the total numbers of those holding xenophobic attitudes are not increasing, these beliefs are fuelled and given legitimacy by many mainstream politicians and media who bombard their readers with negative stories about immigration, the most prominent newspapers in the UK being the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express*.¹⁰¹

On top of these 'legitimate' sources there are suggestions of interference from powerful outside sources. Research by 89up, the impact agency for civil society and non-profits, has revealed the extent of Russian interference in the referendum campaign: 'the social reach of these anti-EU articles published by the Kremlin-owned channels was 134 million potential impressions, in comparison with a total social reach of just 33 million and 11 million potential impressions for all content shared from the Vote Leave website and Leave.EU website respectively.'¹⁰²

Even without support from the Kremlin the histrionic approach of the Brexit supporting media led to headlines such as these:

'ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE – Fury over "out of touch" judges who defied 17.4m Brexit voters and could trigger constitutional crisis' – *Daily Mail*, 3 November 2016

'THE BREXIT MUTINEERS – Remain supporting Conservative rebel against May's move to enshrine in law the date Britain leaves EU' – *Daily Telegraph*, 14 November 2017

'TIME TO SILENCE EU EXIT WHINGERS' – *Daily Express*, 12 October 2016

'Damn the unpatriotic Breemoaners and their plot to subvert to the will of the British people' – *Daily Mail* editorial, 11 October 2016

In all these cases the judges and politicians who were being damned were acting to uphold parliamentary democracy, the very institution the *Mail*, *Telegraph* and *Express* claimed the Brexit vote was all about.

Then there was the reaction to the vote that ensured parliament would have a say in the final Brexit deal. You would again have expected that Brexiteers would have applauded this re-statement of the sovereignty of parliament but of course the opposite was the case because, for them Brexit is worth almost any sacrifice. This leads to the use of biblical language by leading Brexiteers. So, for example, Boris Johnson depicts Brexit as reaching the promised land – 'a glorious view awaits' – and William Rees-Mogg sees it as achieving 'sublime heaven'.¹⁰³

The revolt by 11 Tory MPs was greeted by another *Daily Mail* headline which is surely one of the most verbose for many years:

'PROUD OF YOURSELVES? Just as the newly confident Tories inch ahead in the polls, 11 self-consumed malcontents pull the rug from under our EU negotiators, betray their leader, party and 17.4m Brexit voters and – most damning of all – increase the possibility of a Marxist in No. 10' – *Daily Mail*, 14 December 2017

All of these reports carried photographs of the miscreants and it was this reporting that was cited by ‘mutineer’ Tory MPs as being directly responsible for triggering violent responses from vehement Brexiteers, confirming many of the findings of the studies on collective narcissism.

Anna Soubry, former Conservative Minister for Small Business, received this from a man in Tonbridge, Kent: ““You deserve to be HUNG for your attack on our democracy yesterday. WE VOTED OUT! OUT! OUT!” The writer, who gave his full address and telephone number, ended the email: “MAY YOU BURN IN HELL FOR ETERNITY.”” She argued that the media had ‘fuelled a lot of this... The words in certain newspapers are replicated – so “mutineer” is then in an email saying: “We all know what happens to mutineers, let’s see you hanging from a lamppost or a tree.”’¹⁰⁴

Dominic Grieve, former Conservative Attorney General, has written:

‘I worry that rational debate about leaving the European Union is becoming impossible in this atmosphere of crisis and confrontation... Some of this was fuelled and orchestrated by newspapers that seem entirely disinhibited in the inaccuracies they peddle and the vitriolic abuse they are prepared to heap on those who do anything they consider to be at variance with their version of what Brexit should be. This both obscures the real issues and encourages an atmosphere of crisis and confrontation between binary positions that leads directly to the death threats that we have received. In turn, this undermines the ability of politicians to engage in rational debate or make sound judgments on issues where there is often no certain answer.’¹⁰⁵

Quite how anybody, let alone a newspaper editor, can print such abuse only 18 months after the brutal political murder of an MP beggars belief. No wonder Nicky Morgan, former Conservative Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities, has suggested that British democracy is going ‘badly wrong’.¹⁰⁶

Then there are individual columnists such as Melanie Phillips in *The Times*. Phillips writes with all the zeal of a convert from liberalism to neo-conservatism; supporting Dr Andrew Wakefield’s fraudulent work on the MMR vaccine, denying climate change and opposing gay marriage. Whilst agreeing that the Brexit vote has divided Britain Phillips lays the blame at the door of the EU, which she has called ‘the engine room for extremism’.¹⁰⁷ In the same article she denies there is any such thing as European identity but there is a British identity and it stands for freedom which, of course, Europe does not. She equates the denial of natural ‘national communities’ with the denial of people feeling part of a nation. This is a total falsification of the argument which confirms her own prejudice. British people are no more ‘naturally’ freedom-loving than any others. Though Britain may have a history that demonstrates greater freedom than some other countries this has no connection to some magical ‘freedom gene’ passed down through the generations but is the result of complex historical factors including early industrialisation and, especially, the fact that the country hasn’t successfully been invaded since 1066.

More recently Phillips wrote about the ‘persecution’ of intellectuals (including of course herself) who support Brexit saying of Remainers that ‘they don’t value democratic sovereignty. Many despise it. That’s why they want to remain in the EU.’¹⁰⁸ This is curious logic. If I suggest that leaving the EU will not restore ‘democratic sovereignty’ to the UK it is not that I ‘despise democracy’ it is because I consider such reasoning to be flawed. Phillips rather undermines her own argument by equating those who support Brexit with intellectuals who advocate ‘intelligent design’ or reject the case that humans affect climate change. Phillips confirms her psychological positioning to be well within the

collective narcissist category by ending her piece with the highly democratic comment that ‘the battle over Brexit is now a fight to the death.’

Research by Ipsos MORI has found that ‘newspaper readership is much more likely to be significantly related to concern about immigration, after controlling for other demographic differences, than any other issue measured.’¹⁰⁹ It is not causal – ie because people read the *Daily Mail* they view immigration negatively, it is mainly the other way around. People read these papers and follow columnists such as Phillips because they conform to their existing views. The papers respond by pandering to their readers’ prejudices thus reinforcing them and adding to the ‘normalisation’ of such views.¹¹⁰

Perhaps the greatest danger is that, with Britain out of Europe, the collective narcissists and those who feed their bigotry will no longer have Brussels to blame. Because they see leaving the EU in messianic terms when Brexit makes Britain worse off the *Daily Mail*, John Redwood, Nigel Farage and their ilk will have to look elsewhere for the culprits and I don’t think it’s difficult to see who they will mainly identify – the immigrants who are already here. The same people are also apoplectic that Britain will be paying its residual commitments to the EU and any concession from the ‘purity’ of the hardest of Brexits is met by further cognitive xenophobia.

Democracy under attack

With Brexit, the election of Donald Trump, the Freedom Party sharing power in Austria, the Law and Justice Party in power in Poland, Alternative for Germany (AfD) winning 94 seats and entering parliament for the first time, Geert Wilders's Freedom Party (PVV) coming second in the Dutch election, Marine Le Pen of the National Front (FN) reaching the run-off for the Presidency in France and gains by populist and anti-democratic parties in Italy and Hungary there is little doubt that xenophobically fuelled populism is on the rise across western democracies for the first time in over 80 years.

In the UK an immediate issue arising from Brexit is Northern Ireland where, if any kind of hard border reappears, it may plunge the province back into violent unrest. It is profoundly ironic that the extraordinary work of a Tory Prime Minister, John Major, in achieving peace in Northern Ireland may be undone by those he once described as the ‘bastards’.¹¹¹

How many of you knew this was an issue when you voted? How many of you knew that the Ulster Unionist Party (the one the Tory Party are supposed to be allied to - their official title is still the Conservative and Unionist Party) campaigned for remain? Instead the Tories are allied to the Brexit-supporting DUP. And of course, Northern Ireland voted to remain in the EU by a significant majority of 56% to 44%.

I’m also still at a complete loss to understand how the supposedly ‘frictionless border’ between the South and the North in Ireland will work and also won’t just be an ‘open door’ to the illegal immigrants Brexit supporters want to keep out.

Then, as we’ve seen, with the eradication of the ECJ as the final arbiter on UK laws, many also fear that Britain’s human rights will be adversely affected by leaving the EU with rights to privacy, equality, freedom of expression, fair working conditions, a fair trial, access to a lawyer and protection of personal data all in potential jeopardy.

Combating hatred

Immigration and economics leads us to the heart of philanthropy and charity – the support for the most disadvantaged in society. The Brexit ‘debate’, if it can be graced with such a title given the

poverty of actual 'debate', has undoubtedly led to greater intolerance, hardly surprising when images of Syrian refugees entering Turkey were utilised on a UKIP poster to drum up support for preventing EU immigration to the UK.¹¹²

The *Daily Express* then used the same image as the UKIP poster, combining it with a photograph of a classroom to give the impression that these Syrians are coming to get places at UK schools. This was a deliberate conflation between immigration from the EU and asylum seekers and refugees who, by definition, cannot be EU citizens. They 'validated' this linkage with a quote from Priti Patel: 'Migration is leading British families to lose out in primary school choices.'¹¹³ The linkage therefore suggested that the children of Syrian refugees were taking up significant numbers of primary school places when the average number of Syrian child refugees in each local authority area of the UK was four.

Another example is the Calais refugee camp about which the *Daily Express* article claimed:

'Horrors of Calais migrant camp EXPOSED as Brits told way to tackle crisis is LEAVE EU – A SHOCKING video unveiled by UKIP has revealed the horrors of the lawless Calais Jungle camp as British voters are warned the only way to tackle the spiralling migrant crisis is to back a Brexit.'¹¹⁴

So, according to the *Express*, the only way to stop illegal immigration from outside the EU is to leave the EU. I'm surprised they didn't suggest moving Britain physically further away from Europe as the logic is no more ridiculous.

At the same time the same media and politicians claimed that their opponents were trying to silence them: 'Priti Patel told British parents their children's school places were being taken by migrants, she told the *Telegraph* it was not racist to speak about immigration (16 April). Patel subsequently "slammed" the Establishment for trying to close down free speech on immigration (25 May).' The *Telegraph* lamented the way in which 'the establishment tries to silence and ignore voters' reasonable concerns about the mass immigration that is an intrinsic part of the European project'. Later in the campaign, Dominic Raab also claimed that elites were trying to silence debate (22 May).¹¹⁵ Leaving aside the bizarre idea that government ministers and the *Daily Telegraph* are not part of the 'establishment' even if their claim of being 'gagged' were true it obviously had no impact whatsoever as the constant stream of anti-immigrant invective continued unabated.

Among the more bizarre claims that the King's College study of media coverage of the referendum found were that EU immigrants were:

- Benefitting from cheaper weddings (*Daily Express*, 5 May 2016);
- Bringing diseases to Britain (*Daily Express*, 18 April 2016);
- Overwhelming the NHS (many examples from the *Sun* and *Express*) and even
- Causing traffic congestion (*Daily Express*, 18 April 2016)¹¹⁶

It was probably a good thing that when England lost to Iceland in the European Football Championship it came just after the referendum, or that we didn't lose to Poland as immigrants would certainly have received the blame.

Then there has been the dramatic spike in hate crimes since June 2016. 'In 2016/17, there were 80,393 offences recorded by the police in which one or more hate crime strands were deemed to be a motivating factor. This was an increase of 29 per cent compared with the 62,518 hate crimes recorded in 2015/16, the largest percentage increase seen since the series began in 2011/12.'¹¹⁷

Figure 16: Hate crimes recorded by the police by monitored strand 20011/12 to 2016/17

Hate crime strand	England and Wales, recorded crime						% change 2015/16 to 2016/17
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	
Race	35,944	35,845	37,575	42,862	49,419	62,685	27
Religion	1,618	1,572	2,264	3,293	4,400	5,949	35
Sexual orientation	4,345	4,241	4,588	5,591	7,194	9,157	27
Disability	1,748	1,911	2,020	2,515	3,629	5,558	53
Transgender	313	364	559	607	858	1,248	45
Total number of motivating factors	43,968	43,933	47,006	54,868	65,500	84,597	29
Total number of offences	N/A	42,255	44,577	52,465	62,518	80,393	29

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office. O'Neill, Aoife, 'Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2016/17', Home Office Statistical Bulletin 17 October 2017.

We have also seen that this is not simply a British phenomenon and the same intolerance has fuelled attacks on Muslims across the world. Many of the anti-Islamic cartoons in the British, French, American and Australian mainstream press are frighteningly reminiscent of the depictions of Jews from the Nazi press of the 1930s.¹¹⁸

Three metaphors were dominant in the coverage of migrants during and after the Brexit campaign: migrants as water ('floodgates', 'waves'), as animals or insects ('flocking', 'swarming') or as an invading force.¹¹⁹

Perhaps most notorious of all was Katie Hopkins column in the *Sun* when discussing refugees from Syria: 'make no mistake these migrants are like cockroaches'.¹²⁰ Is her comparison very different from this?

'The human being consequently designates what is useful to him as good and what is harmful as bad. Didn't bedbugs and rats have a life purpose also? Yes, but this had never meant that man could not defend himself against vermin.'

The comments, about Jews, were made by Heinrich Himmler in a speech to the Einsatzgruppe B death squad in August 1941 during their extermination campaign in Belarus.¹²¹ Yet the chief executive of press regulator Ipso, Matt Tee, defended his decision not to take action against Hopkins saying, 'bad taste' was not in its remit.¹²² Perhaps it is fortunate that Mr Tee was not around to defend democracy in the 1930s.

No wonder the conclusion of the King's College study of the referendum was that: 'The campaign leading up to the vote to remain or leave the EU on 23 June 2016 was the UK's most divisive, hostile, negative and fear-provoking of the 21st century.'¹²³ As a historian I would suggest that it would be difficult to find a political campaign as divisive in British history unless you look as far back as the Civil War.

So, a vital task for philanthropy is to vigorously oppose racism and ignorance regarding immigration as well as providing support for immigrants and directly challenging racist and inflammatory journalism.

A new role for philanthropy?

The immediate effect of Brexit on charities will be a loss of European funding which has been calculated as at least £258 million a year.¹²⁴ So charities will have to do more with less money. But the impact will be much deeper than this and there are many things philanthropy can do in response.

It would not be the first time in British history that philanthropy has risen to such a challenge. In a survey by Dr Beth Breeze of Kent University the single most frequently named historic achievement of British philanthropy was the campaign to end the slave trade.¹²⁵ The Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was founded in 1787 by Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson, with the contribution of William Wilberforce being most widely remembered. Many thousands of philanthropic men and women joined the campaign, ran local groups, raised funds, distributed pamphlets and worked collectively for decades to secure the successful passage of the 1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act and the 1833 Slavery Abolition Act.

The reasons for philanthropy's success were innovation, speed of action and risk taking, freed from the need to be accountable to the electorate or to pacify the media. These advantages remain today, as long as philanthropy chooses to utilise them.

I'm pleased to say that philanthropy has made a start.

Keiran Goddard, Head of External Affairs at the Association of Charitable Foundations, has made some sensible suggestions including:

- Foundations working within communities to empower their grantees;
- Increasing funds aimed at building leadership;
- Funders leveraging their role as facilitators, convenors, and communicators to begin to build a genuinely collaborative discourse around social change;
- Setting up an official group to speak on behalf of UK funders in Brussels and
- Articulating a vision for philanthropically funded social diplomacy in the face of reduced inter-governmental collaboration.¹²⁶

And in a series of joint publications Dan Corry, Chief Executive of New Philanthropy Capital, and Paul Streets, Chief Executive of the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales, have gone further. In what they term a 'Provocation Paper' they argue:

'Grant-makers are major players in shaping civil society. At £6.5bn, the value of grants made by independent foundations to the voluntary sector now exceeds grants made by government... Funders must consider how they can use their brains, as well as their financial brawn, to support a much relied-upon and overstretched voluntary sector... It's time to ask whether charitable foundations in the UK are doing enough—and are doing the right things—to support the voluntary and community sector. Is funding services sufficient?'¹²⁷

Corry and Streets suggest that 'at their best, the UK's foundations can be entrepreneurial, transformational catalysts for social change, bringing all of their assets to bear on the challenges we face as a society. But not enough do this... Many funders are conscious of, and keen to avoid, exploiting their power.' I wholeheartedly agree with them and when they suggest that:

'UK funders need to be bolder. They hold both the resources and expertise to make a more substantial difference. Foundations must exploit the potential of their knowledge, expertise, data, networks, convening power, and human energy and talent if we are to help create

positive social change... Now more than ever, foundations should be considering whether they should be agents of change rather than just funders of it.¹²⁸

Some funders, such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation have:

‘long led the way, inspiring social change to reduce poverty through research, policy and practice, and speaking out loudly where they identify policy that is hampering the cause. Others like Trust for London have driven change by commissioning challenging research. Their work on the costs and impact of low wages led to the London Living Wage campaign for fairer pay across the city.’¹²⁹

In the NPC/Lloyds Bank Foundation’s accompanying paper ‘More Than Grants: How Funders Can Use Their Influence for Good’ these ideas are expanded.¹³⁰ Among other things they suggest trusts and foundations should support grantees in their advocacy work, encouraging grantees to campaign, campaigning as a funder and influencing other funders.

Karl Wilding, Director of Public Policy and Volunteering at NCVO, has written that foundations should be supporting effective, successful campaigning.¹³¹ They have the convening power and financial independence that others don’t.

There are, of course, issues that funders need to consider before directing funding towards campaigning:

‘There are risks involved in this work—reputation risk, potentially legal risk, but also the uncertainty of whether the objectives will be met. These issues cannot be divorced from the topic on which a funder is considering campaigning—for more controversial topics all these risks will be increased.’¹³²

Again, we already have examples of those who are leading the way, including the social change funding of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. This has a broad focus on a just and inclusive society, including LGBT rights, ending modern day slavery and legal advocacy for disadvantaged young people. Then there is the support for young campaigners from organisations as diverse as the Sheila McKechnie Foundation and Fixers, who give young campaigners a voice in the media, as well as youth and pupil parliaments that engage children and young people in reasoned debate and the democratic process.

And more than 80 organisations have joined forces in the ‘Repeal Bill Alliance’ which is working to ensure robust parliamentary scrutiny and safeguards against the transfer of power to the Executive, the preservation of hard won rights and freedoms and the inclusion of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in the Brexit legislation. The Alliance’s work is being made possible by funding from several charitable foundations including:

- The Barrow Cadbury Fund;
- The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust;
- The Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust;
- Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales;
- The Paul Hamlyn Foundation and
- The Legal Education Foundation.

I would like to see this co-operation grow, by including individual supporters, and expanding its brief to include combating all negative fallout from Brexit including support for immigrant and refugee rights and vigorously opposing all forms of xenophobia and ‘alt right’ extremism. This wider

campaign needs to harness all the modern techniques exploited by those on the other side – most notably social media. I agree entirely with Yvette Cooper when she said in the House of Commons on 30 November 2017 that ‘online is where the new battle for democracy is being fought’.¹³³ This will require the participation of media and tech companies and mobilising volunteers will be a crucial element.

Some of this work may be better led by individual philanthropists rather than charitable foundations as individuals are far less hidebound by legal restrictions on political activity. Similar individuals exist on the other side of the fence such as Arron Banks, Peter Hosking and Lord Edmiston who each backed the leave campaign with seven figure donations. We need a similar campaign by those who reject their philosophy.

In brief, philanthropy needs to become a lot more ‘political’. This doesn’t mean party political, after all 42% of Conservative supporters and 57% of their MPs supported remain and it would also have the support of many religious leaders as well.¹³⁴

Progressive philanthropists in this country should also take a leaf out of the success over the last 30 years of neo-conservative philanthropy in the United States which helped secure the election of Ronald Reagan and his administration’s turn towards monetarism as well as subsequent campaigns against everything from abortion to immigration. Notable among them have been the Heritage Foundation, who advocated the development of new ballistic missile systems, established the Margaret Thatcher Center for Freedom and whose leader Rebekah Mercer played a major role in shaping Donald Trump’s transition team; the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, who have supported the movement to finance private alternatives to public education and the Pittsburgh-based Colcom Foundation. Colcom is the largest funder of anti-immigration groups in the US. In 2011-12 Colcom donated over \$11 million to anti-immigrant groups such as the Center for Immigration Studies, FAIR (the Federation for American Immigration Reform) and the VDare Foundation, whose website is associated with white nationalism and the need to ‘defend white American culture’ – a kind of institutionalised collective narcissism. In election year 2016 Colcom’s funding for FAIR soared to \$2.5 million.¹³⁵

The key to the success of this funding is that it has played the long-game, investing over many years to build the strong advocacy, policy and media structure needed to influence public opinion, gain mainstream credibility for their views and successfully shift agendas.

Philanthropy could also take a leaf out of Donald Trump’s book and attack the attackers. Not with lies of course, but without fear of legal action. So, funders should also offer legal assistance in key cases. In these ways philanthropy can challenge attacks on immigrants, charities and non-conforming MPs and judges.

Some funders may need to form non-charitable arms to do some of this work. Campaigning against the current government’s ‘gagging clauses’ in grant agreements and the invidious Lobbying Act, about the only law in the UK you can break without knowing whether you’ve done so, could well be considered ‘party political’ especially if money is used, as it would need to be, to fund parliamentary lobbyists to change minds in Westminster.

Such a campaign will also require the support of academic institutions who themselves are under threat. We all remember Michael Gove’s rant against so-called experts.¹³⁶ I think he should remember that when Antoine Lavoisier, the great chemist and discoverer of oxygen, was sentenced to the guillotine in 1794, the president of the tribunal is supposed to have declared: ‘The republic has no need of experts.’¹³⁷

Then there was junior minister Chris Heaton-Harris asking all vice-chancellors if they would be 'so kind' as to supply the names of professors teaching European affairs 'with particular reference to Brexit', together with copies of their syllabus and links to online lectures.¹³⁸ I will of course be furnishing Mr Heaton-Harris with a full copy of this paper.

Changing minds on key issues – immigration and economics

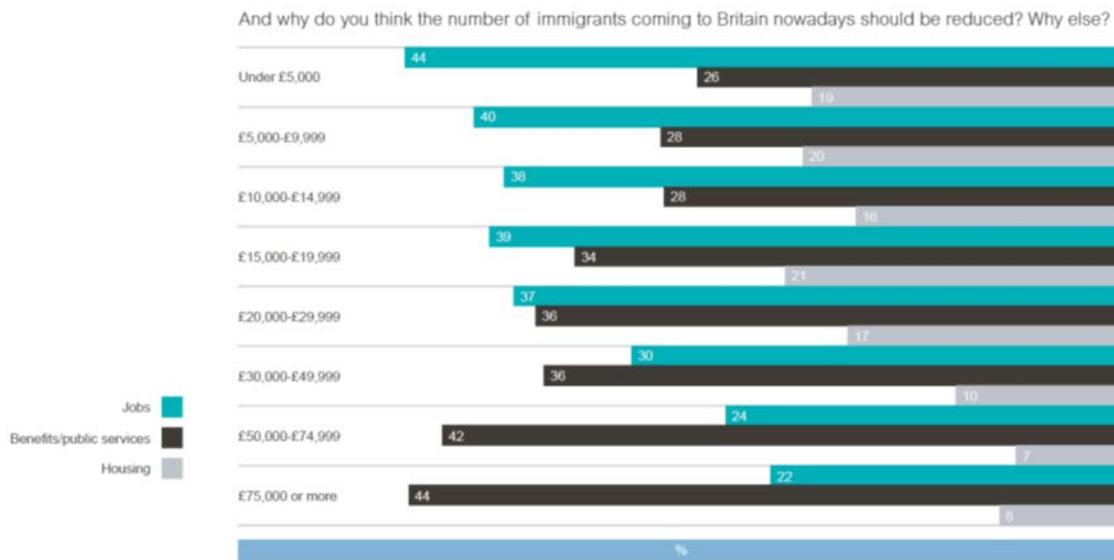
In a 2013 study published by Lord Ashcroft on public attitudes towards immigration he demonstrated the importance of age, class and education in shaping views.¹³⁹ He suggests there are seven segments of opinion among Britons on the topic of immigration, four anti and three pro. The main anti-immigrant groups he defined as:

- 'Universal Hostility' (16% of the population): the most negative group, hostile to all aspects of immigration. Members of this group are most likely to be working class, middle-aged and with low levels of formal education.
- 'Cultural Concerns' (16%): largely composed of older people, this group believe immigration has on the whole been bad for the UK. They are concerned about cultural changes in their local area and/or in society, as well as the pressure of immigration on public services.
- 'Competing for Jobs' (14%): this group is most concerned about the impact of immigration on jobs and wages. They are more likely than average to think immigrants take jobs that would otherwise go to British people and/or that they push down wages.
- 'Fighting for Entitlements' (12%): This group is predominantly concerned about its impact on competition for public services and benefits. This group is older than average with relatively low levels of formal education.

Whilst it is entirely unproven, Ashcroft's 'universally hostile' category is likely to contain the most collectively narcissistic individuals and be impervious to changing of their views. The other three might be convinced if they could be persuaded their reason for opposition is wrong – partly by focussing on the net contribution immigrants make to the economy. Which is where philanthropy and academia could play a vital role.

One aspect of the concerns about immigration is how unevenly they are spread across the population. Broadly the poorer you are the more concerned you'll be about the impact of immigration on jobs and housing, the richer you are the more likely you will claim immigration has an adverse impact on public services.

Figure 17: Reasons given among people who view immigration as a problem in Britain by income



Source: Duffy, Bobby and Tom Frere-Smith, 'Perceptions and Reality: Public attitudes to immigration', Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute, 2014 p 54

This suggests we need a campaign that is nuanced enough to take account of these views.

We can certainly enlist some formidable figures in this campaign. For example, the person who said this when advocating the single market:

'Just think for a moment what a prospect that is. A single market without barriers—visible or invisible—giving you direct and unhindered access to the purchasing power of over 300 million of the world's wealthiest and most prosperous people. Bigger than Japan. Bigger than the United States. On your doorstep. And with the Channel Tunnel to give you direct access to it. It's not a dream. It's not a vision. It's not some bureaucrat's plan. It's for real.'¹⁴⁰

That person was of course Margaret Thatcher and she had considerable influence in the design of the single market. It was therefore a somewhat bitter irony when Theresa May used the same venue, Lancaster House, to announce that Britain was turning its back on what Thatcher called 'the major factor, in our competitive position in European and world markets into the twenty-first century'.¹⁴¹

Conclusion

What I hope I have shown is that the Brexit vote was not a reasoned decision by an informed British public but a reaction to irrational fears based on psychological factors that are hard to change. Aside from the small minority of hard-line Brexiteers, even most Tory MPs, including the current Chancellor and possibly the Prime Minister herself, agree that Brexit is a mistake. In this respect Conor Gearty, Professor of Human Rights Law at the London School of Economics, is right when he said 'Brexit strikes me as our Vietnam. Everybody rational knows it is – how can I put it politely? – not going well. But no one with authority seems able to say so.'¹⁴² And there is another parallel to Vietnam. The war split American opinion in two, not just between left and right but also strongly on generational lines. Despite this the United States did eventually find a way out, even if the scars of the conflict have taken decades to heal.

My colleagues at City's NatCen Social Research Institute have demonstrated an interesting aspect of the 'collective narcissist' group we previously identified. Most of them are not supporters of any political party and 34% of them did not vote in the 2015 General Election. This group are also unlikely to vote in any future General Election and thus will have a negligible impact on the results.

All of those who have distinct xenophobic tendencies are also likely to be confirmed in their beliefs that Brexit was a 'good thing' by the immediate downward impact on immigration from Europe.

We are therefore faced with the strong likelihood that future UK parliaments will be opposed to the country's isolation from the rest of Europe to the extent that they will seek to re-join the EU at some point. On top of this the situation in Scotland and Northern Ireland will be exceptionally difficult to resolve.

Will this trigger a further crisis? I think it highly likely.

At times of crisis, and especially when democracy has been under threat, philanthropy and the voluntary sector has been at its best and has acted completely independently of government. This was true of the campaign against the slave trade, during the industrial revolution and the struggle for universal suffrage, in both world wars, during the slump of the 1930s and in the counter culture era of the 1960s. And it can be the same again.

Paul Streets suggests, correctly in my view, that the Brexit debate is merely a symptom of a wider challenge for philanthropy. The contraction of the state and the impact of the financial crisis on key services were already impacting on the most vulnerable in society. Even without Brexit this is not likely to improve. At the same time many charities have large-scale contracts with the government and won't, or can't, speak out on some of the crucial issues. So who fills the vacuum? Independent philanthropic institutions and philanthropists are surely the best placed, just as they were in the 1790s or the 1850s.

During the period from 27 June to 6 July 1939 the Ministry of Information produced a series of three 'Home Publicity' posters which were intended to be distributed to strengthen morale in the event of a wartime disaster, such as mass bombing of major cities or poison gas, which were widely expected within hours of an outbreak of war. We may not quite be in as dire a situation today, but their messages are highly relevant as the popularity of the best known (though least used) of them demonstrates:

'Keep Calm and Carry On'

However, the one I was mainly thinking about is:

'Freedom is in Peril. Defend it with all your might.'

Perhaps it could become the slogan of the new campaign?

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